CHHATRAPATIS OF SATARA

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ABBREVIATIONS

M.R.	=	Marathi Riyasat
Rajwade	=	Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane
T.S.M.Y.C.	=	Thorale Shahu Maharaj Yanche Charitra
S.P.D.	=	Selection from Peshwa Daftar
N.H.M.	=	New History of the Marathas
P.R.C.	=	Poona Residency Correspondence
I.H.R.C.	=	Indian Historical Record Commission
B.M.E.	=	Bajirao II and Fall of Maratha Empire

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CHAPTER ONE

FROM RAIGAD TO SATARA

CHAPTER ONE | FROM RAIGAD TO SATARA

In the later part of the Maratha rule Satara became the capital of the Chhatrapatis and it remained dominating centre of political activities at least under Shahu from 1708 to 1749. Satara was chosen because it -

> *stands on a hill belonging to a range, which it completely commands. The height of the fort is about three hundred yards above the plain its length twelve hundred yards and its breadth varying from three hundred to eighty at the western point. There is a table-land formed by the hand of nature on the top. On this solid foundation the rampart is built of a masonry about eighty feet high and as many broad. The Pettah or city of Satara lies below in the plain under the north face of the fort; it is of great extent and seemed rich and populous. The top of the hill commands a most delightful view of the valleys of Satara, through the Krishna and Yermody meander and glitter to the eye with pleasing variety.*[1]

The word 'Satara' is derived from the Persian word 'Sitara' (meaning high). There are some who believe that the word Satara has been derived from 'Saptarshi' the deity of the hill fort. It is also likely that the place derived its name Satara due to the seven

strips of valley around the fort of Satara (Saat-dara in Maratha).[2] The town of Satara is situated at the hill fort which is surmounted by a fort called 'Azimtara'. In fact the people in olden days lived on the fort and later at the base. Satara is situated in such a tract of land which forms the link between Konkan and Desh. Satara seems to have very long history behind it. The place named Satara-Karad is confirmed by group of sixty-three early Buddhist caves about three miles South-west of Karad.[3] After the Rashtrakuta, Satara fort came under the dynasty of Kolhapur-Shilahars and Devgiri-Yadavas. In the period of Bahamani Satara province was included in Bijapur territory. Maharashtra was granted on military tenure to the Maratha chiefs who took service under Adilshahi. The principal Maratha chiefs in Satara region were Chandrarao More of Javali, Ravrambha Naik-Nimbalkar of Phaltan, Jagdevrao Ghatage of Malwadi, Daphale of Jat, and Mane of Mhaswad. Maratha chief Chandrarao More was appointed at Javali region in Sahyadri range. He was the commander of a body of 12000 Hindu infantry. More commanded dignity with the title of 'Chandrarao More'. Adilshahi had also confirmed on Shahaji Bhosale a royal grant for the Deshmukhi of twenty-two villages in the district of Kar[illegible] Shahaji Raje Bhosale was the father of Shivaji, the founder of Maratha empire.

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Shivaji the founder of the Maratha Empire was one of the rare gifted leaders of men with sound head to plan and hand to execute. He carved out an independent kingdom of his own during the years 1664-1674 and coronated himself as the sovereign ruler. In fact the fort of Satara was with Bijapur and it was always kept in good order. After Javli Shivaji made efforts to capture Satara fort and he succeeded in capturing it only in September 1673. Shivaji made a permanent arrangement for Satara fort. Balprabhu was appointed as his Mansabdar for Satara region.[4] On 25 October 1673 fort Parali was handed by Shivaji to Samarth Ramdas for his shrine and named it as Sajjangad or fort of the pious.

When Shivaji satisfied himself about the security of his newly established Swarajya by building a strong army and navy he coronated himself at Raigad on 6 June, 1674 and took the title 'Chhatrapati' - lord of throne. The coronation ceremony put a final seal on all the nation-building activities that Shivaji had put forth in which he called forth for sacrifice, co-operation, sense of national unity and brotherhood and stopped for a time fissiparous tendencies of the Marathas.[5] The most noteworthy feature of Shivaji's coronation was the creation of the council of ministers known as 'Ashta Pradhan Mandal'.

There was an internal rivalry among the Sardars of Bijapur. Shivaji took advantage of the rivalry and attached the Bijapur area from Panhala to Tathwada. However when Shivaji engaged himself in Konkan, Nimbalkar and Ghatge recovered the area from Panhala to Tathwad for Bijapur.[6]

But Shivaji again conquered it. He also ordered his soldiers to seize the forts between Parali and Satara, Vardhangad and Bhushangad. The fort of Satara was recaptured by Shivaji on 11 November 1975.[7]

Shivaji liked Satara fort very much and at once took up his residence there, assigning the neighbouring fort of Parali to his Guru Ramdas. While Shivaji was in Satara, he suddenly fell ill which confined him to Satara for several months.[8] A sudden and extreme depression took possession of his mind probably on account of his son Sambhaji's misbehaviour. During this period he became extra vigilent and rigid in the observance of religious spractices. But he was at the same time planning the most important expedition of his life known as the 'Karnatak expedition'.[9] Being worn out by constant exertion while establishing new Kingdom, he succumbed to his illness and passed away on 5 April, 1680.

Shivaji was not merely a founder of a kingdom

but was an epoch-making ruler in medieval history. He called his kingdom a Swarajya territory and handed it downs to the posterity. In his system of administration his ministers were all paid servants. They were not allowed to become hereditary officers. They continued in their respective positions as long as they carried on their duties well and enjoyed the confidence of the Chhatrapati. Justice Ranade in his "Rise of the Maratha Power" regarded Shivaji as the creator of lasting institutions.

Shivaji had built up his military and revenue system. His infantry was carefully divided into regiments, and the cavalry was divided into two classes, the Bargirs and Shiledars. In times of emergency Shivaji could call the feudal forces but he never depended upon them. Organization of navy was another department of Shivaji's military system. The strong hill forts in his territory were a natural barrier to the progress of the hostile army. These forts were used both for offensive and defensive warfare. Shivaji had provided for the security of Maratha state. It is in this regard that Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his book Shivaji and His Times, regarded him as "the last great constructive genius and nation-builder".

He never made any grants of Jagir for military service. Inam lands were granted as a gift especially

to Brahmins being of all charities the most acceptable to the divinity.

> *Shivaji's ministers, cannot, therefore, be regarded as heads of Departments and his government was by no means a bureaucracy. It was if anything, an autocracy. But the autocrat fortunately for his people, was a practical statesman and acted as Benevolent Despot.*[10]

Grand Duff says:

> *The highest legacy of Shivaji to his nation was not the territory and treasures he acquired but the example of service and sacrifice which he infused into the Maratha people.*[11]

Immediately after the death of Shivaji his elder son Sambhaji made his escape from Panhala with the help of Hambirrao Mohite and made himself master of his father's dominion on 20 July 1680. The coronation ceremony was performed on 16 January, 1681. A conspiracy of supporting Rajaram by Shirke family was discovered. Some members of Shirke family fled in terror for their lives and several of them entered Mughal service.[12] Sambhaji grew extremely suspicious of some of his father's faithful servants. He selected the new advisor, the famous Kavi-Kalash, a Brahmin of Kanouj. Taking advantage of the new situation, Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor,

reached Burhanpur on 13 November 1681. He had his dream of conquering South India for extending Mughal rule over the whole of India.

In 1686 Bijapur fell to Aurangzeb and Bijapur Adilshahi came to an end. Mughal encamped on the Bhima near Pandharpur and sent Sharza Khan to invade Sambhaji's districts.[13] When Sharza Khan reached Wai, Hambirrao Mohite came to oppose him. Battle was fought between Satara and Wai. Sambhaji's Senapati Hambirrao fell mortally wounded and lost his life on the battle-field. Thus Satara[14] region came under the Mughal control in 1686. Sambhaji suffered a great set-back in the death of Hambirrao Mohite.

The hilly region between Satara and Kolhapur was long held by Shirkes who were Sambhaji's enemies. They now played their games. They watched Sambhaji's movement and communicated to the Mughal officers. Aurangzeb left Bijapur and encamped at Akluj on the Bhima near Pandharpur. He had now decided to concentrate all his power and energy against Sambhaji. The Mughal troops had patrolled all the region from Panhala to Tathavada. On the 1st of February, 1689 Sambhaji was captured at Sangameshwar by Nizam. He was carried in triumph to Aurangzeb's camp at Akluj. It is difficult to say why Sambhaji stayed at Sangameshwar.[15] The news of catpure of Sambhaji was first brought to Raigad by Santaji

and Khando Ballal who escaped and fled to Raigad. Changoji Katkar, the Killedar and Yesaji Kank, the old Mavala captain were at Raigad. At the fort Yesubai, the queen of Sambhaji was the only elderly and responsible person from the royal family. She performed the Manchakarohan ceremony for Rajaram instead of performing it for her son Shahu, who was seven years old, on 9 February 1689. Thus, she avoided a rift on the issue of succession to the throne either in the royal family or indirectly in the Maratha State.[16]

Ruhalla Khan suggested to Sambhaji that he can save his life if - (1) he surrendered all his forts, (2) disclosed all his hidden treasure, and (3) declared the names of those Mughal officers who were in league with him. But Sambhaji denied it. Aurangzeb sent message offering his life on condition of his embracing Islam. But Sambhaji refused all this and faced the cruel death on 11 March, 1689 for his country.

Due to his short and stormy regime surrounded by enemies on all sides, Sambhaji did not make any new changes in the administration. He followed his father's administrative system of 'Ashta Pradhan Mandal'. However certain evil practices slowly crept in the administration for the lack of constant vigilence. The farming and revenue system came into use to the

great suffering of the rayats. After the death of Sambhaji, Maratha Kingdom was threatened with speedy ruin due to mal-administration.

Sambjaji's mode of embracing death aroused nationality in Maharashtra and every common man fought for the Chhatrapati. Chhatrapati became a symbol of national aspiration. Sambhaji himself an eminent poet gives expression to his ultimate faith in God -

> In my childhood I lived in imaginary world
> In my youth I was drowned in the love ...
> My mind which remained engrossed in various colourful pursuits so far ...
> Now turns to Lord Krishna ...

Fall of Raigad:

Rajaram, the second son of Shivaji was proclaimed as king during the minority of Shahu, Sambhaji's son, on 9 November 1689. Mughal Emperor sent his commander Zulfiquar Khan to invest the Raigad and all other forts. When Khan arrived before the fort Yesubai, the widowed queen of Sambhaji, gave advice to Rajaram that "Raigad is doubtless a strong fort and can hold out long. He should with his wives and followers clear out before siege became stringent, whereas she could, with her little son Shahu, defend the capital".[17] Rajaram proceeded to Pratapgad and sent his wives to Vishalgad.

Raigad was a strong fort built on large plateau

by Shivaji as his capital. Zufiquir Khan attacked Raigad but was unable to take it. Suryaji Pisal[18] of Wai, an important officer in charge of the defence, opened the get and Raigad fell on 3 November 1689. In fact there was negotiation between Yesubai and Khan. Because the only alternative left to Yesubai and others was to arrive at an honourable compromise and surrender themselves voluntarily to the Mughals. After much hesitation and reluctance Yesubai agreed to this proposal through the mediation of the Begum, the daughter of the Emperor.[19] And the Khan was to swear by the Quaran that the safety and the maintenance of the self-respect of the royal family were assured.

After the fall of Raigad Yesubai and her son Shahu alongwith large number of loyal officers were captured and carried. Aurangzeb's joy to this success knew no bounds though it was short lived as with one voice the Maratha leaders - great and small - pledged themselves to a heroic effort to avenge the national insult of their Chhatrapati having been brutally murdered and his son and wife carried away in captivity. If Raigad is surrendered after negotiation, the contribution of Suryaji Pisal becomes meaningless in the whole affair. Rajaram's position became precarious and he was advised to make good his way to Jinji. With the help of politic Pralhad Niraji he made preliminary arrangement. Rajaram,

with Pralhad Niraji, Khando Ballal, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadhav, Khanderao Dabhade followed the route of Jinji. Leaving Panhala at the end of September 1689, and visiting various fourts, Rajaram reached Jinji on 15 Novembe 1689.[21] They had disguised themselves as Lingayat cloth merchants. Jinji was made a new capital for Maratha Kingdom and formed a new government there for carrying on the struggle against the Mughals. Rajaram wrote several letters encouraging people to fight to defend 'Maratha Swarajya'.

Jinji soon became the centre of Maratha activity where the whole court was assembled and formed. The court was established on his father's plan, the usual Ashta Pradhan Mandal was appointed. A new post called Pratinidhi was cereated for Pralhad Niraji (Representative of King himself). Pralhad Niraji had rendered extraordinary services to Rajaram.

In Maharashtra Rajaram invested Ramchandra Nilkanth Amatya with almost dictatorial powers for the administration of the home territory. Rajaram ordered for carrying on warfare with the Mughals. The credit of organizing the scattered Maratha nation against the Emperor goes to him. The Pant possessed a peculiar genius for recognizing merit in men and harnessing it to promote the national interest. Parashuram Trimbak, Shankaroji Narayan, Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav were employed to carry

on the King's plan. Ramchandra Pant was no soldier and hardly moved from his base on any military expedition. From Vishalgad he kept a vigilant eye upon the doings of the numerous Maratha leaders.

Rajaram Formed Capital at Satara:

Rajaram, after escaping from Jinji, proceeded to Vishalgad on 22 February 1698. Weary of the war, Asad Khan the prime minister urged Aurangzeb to end the Deccan War in any honourable way he could. Asad Khan, however, prevailed on him to open the negotiation. Rajaram also wanted to meet Emperor directly to make peace if Shahu would be released from Mughal's captivity.[22] But the Emperor denied the offer and continued the war. Both Raigad and Jinji had been lost. Vishalgad was too inaccessible for the purpose of easy communication so necessary in administrative work. Fort of Satara was suitable and so it was selected for the new capital of Maratha Power when Rajaram returned from Jinji. Rajaram made Satara his seat of power on Dassera day in 1698.[23]

Rajaram lauded the services of the officers and distributed dresses and honours suited to their rank and achievements. He then disclosed to the Council his plan. "The enemy's power is weakened. Our troops no longer fear to meet the Emperor, our task is reaching

its close". He then raised Timaji Hanumantē to the office of the Pratinidhi and appointed Ramchandra Bavadekar to his old post of Amatya.[24]

After he set a new capital, Rajaram wanted to tour his country to establish contact with local officers and to defeat the Mughals. Rajaram himself started on his northern expedition from the fort of Chandan-Vandan in October 1699. Rajaram took great commanders like Khanderao Dabhade, Parsoji Bhosale, Dhanaji Jadhav with him and made direct attack upon the northern possessions of the Emperor. He put himself at the head of this whole force and moved towards Khandesh and Godavari valley for levying chauth and Sardeshmukhi.[25] He divided the country into military districts and left each district in charge of a strong general. Khanderao Dabhade took post in Baglan and Northern Nasik. Parsoji Bhosale in Berar, Nemaji Shinde in Khandesh, Haibatrao Nimbalkar in the valley of Godavari.

In 1699 Rajaram wished to attack Brahmpuri for raiding the Mughal camp and releasing Shahu if possible.[26] Dhanaji Jadhav, Shinde and Bhosale attacked Brahmpuri and captured ten thousand pet animals carrying supplies to the imperial force. This attack was a failure in the sense that it could not succeed in releasing Shahu and his mother Yesubai. Rajaram could not withstand the strain of this campaign. He was at Sinhagad where

he passed away on 2 March 1700. Loyal Ramchandra Nilkanth stood by his death bed and it was to him that Rajaram disclosed his last with - "the release of Shahu and the liberation of the motherland".[27] Ambikabai became Sati but Tarabai and Rajasbai were more interested in future and they did not follow Ambikabai. Rajaram did not perform his coronation ceremony. In a letter to Pant Sachiv Sankaraji Narayan he says "... God will bring Shahu back safely and he is the true master of the Kingdom".[28]

Rajaram, before fleeing to Jinji, had made some administrative arrangements in Maharashtra. Nilopant Moreshwar was appointed as Peshwa. Ramchandra Pant Bawadekar was given a title of Hukumat Panah. He had full powers of government in the old provinces and commanded all the forts. Parshuram Trimbak was placed under him as assistant. Sidhoji Gujar as Sarkhail with Kanhoji Angre as second in command to look after the fleet, ports and defence of the coast. Mahadji Naik Pansumbal was appointed as Senapati.[29]

Rajaram appointed Ashta Pradhans with a new post of Pratinidhi (representative of king himself) which he specially created for Pralhad Niraji. The number of ministers thus was carried to nine and they were as follows:

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1 Nilo Moreshwar - Peshwa

2 Pralhad Niraji - Pratinidhi

3 Santaji Ghorpade - Senapati

4 Janardhan Pant Hanumante - Hukmatpanah

5 Shankaraji Malhar Nargudkar - Sachiv

6 Shankaracharya Kalgaokar - Panditrao

7 Ramchandra Trimbak Pande - Mantri

8 Balaji Sonadev - Nyayadhish

9 Mahadji Gadadhar - Sumant.[30]

He delegated his authority to two Brahmin officers - Pralhad Niraji and Ramchandra Pant - Hukumatpanah. Therefore the prestige of the kingly office was lowered. After the death of Pralhad Niraji in 1694 Rajaram's affairs went rapidly on the decline.[31] Personal rivalries and jealousies raised their head among the prominent Maratha officers. The civil war between Santaji and Dhanaji broke out. But Rajaram could not handle Santaji properly or at least prevent his murder. This is a sad commentary on his power of control. After this Ramchandra Bawadekar and Parshuram Trimbak became head of the government. Rajaram was personally weak in mind but gave vigorous lead to his compatriots. He undoubtedly showed the greatest sagacity in entrusting tasks which were obviously beyond his own capacity.

The tendency of feudal decentralisation had already begun in his administration. In fact feudalism

was too deeply ingrained in the Maratha character. So, Rajaram lavishly conferred Saranjams and Vatans on all those who went to him at Jinji. It was no doubt an incentive to make people work for gain. The creation of vatan and the grant of Saranjams worked a miracle. They sprang up with large army to fight the Mughals on their own account without financial liabilities. This was a serious departure from Shivaji's policy and it was introduced because of the force of circumstances. The system of conferring lands on military commanders for their service was thus started. Aurangzeb purposely offered to renounce their King and accept his service. By way of counteraction the Maratha government also adopted the same policy. The Maratha leaders and soldiers were openly asked to ravage Mughal territories and conquer lands on promise that these would be left under their own possession hereditarily.[32] After the new court formed at Jinji Rajaram profusely distributed titles gold bangles inams, and Jahagirs. These gifts had the desired eifect to keep alive the interest of the Maratha people and thus ultimately of strengthening the cause.[33]

Two tactics were followed by the Maratha chiefs to defeat the Mughals - the sudden attack on Mughal camp and Guerilla warfare. The Marathas used to suddenly erupt at one place today and elsewhere tomorrow, thus creating confusion and panic among the Mughals. Like

Shivaji Rajaram also collected the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi for military contribution. This contribution was paid by defenceless subject of enemy Kingdom and territories. Rajaram claimed this for Maratha leaders as hereditary pension. Shahu received this as a pension from Mughal government. Maratha claimed the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi and the same were enforced in Nandare, Berar and Khandesh and systematic arrangements were made therefor.[34]

Fall of Satara:

In the meantime the Emperor had begun his new campaign having a garrison at Brahmapuri which he named as Islampur; he led out his grand army in 1699 to reduce the Maratha strongholds. His first object was Vasantgad, a large fort between Krishna and Koyana, then the fort Satara, which had recently risen to the dignity of a capital. After capturing Vasantgad he renamed it as Kalid-i-Fateh or the key of victory. He then marched against Satara. This movement was wholly unexpected by the Marathas because they felt that fort Panhala in Kolhapur would be first to be besieged. The provisions in Satara fort were not enough to stand more than a two months' siege. Aurangzeb took advantage of this when Ramchandra Pant was called to Sinhagad.[35]

On 8 December 1699 Aurangzeb pitched his tents in the village of Karanje, where a ruined column still

marked the site. To the west between Satara and Parali camped Azim Shah whose name has been commemorated by the village of Shahapur.[36] At Shendre Sharza Khan commanded the Southern division of the grand army. A road which he built over the hill is still known as Saraz-Khind. Tarbaiyat Khan commanded the force to the East, and he was also in chief command of the operation. The siege was pressed with the utmost vigour and batteries were raised on the neighbouring mountain of Chambhar Tekadi which commanded Satara fort. The chain of posts between the different camps effectually secured the blockade. Tarbiyat Khan had studied the topography of the fort and drawn a plan of sites for trenches.[37] He made his approach to the main gate of the fort.

The fort occupies the summit of very steep hill of moderate height. The fort defence consists of a sheer scarp of over forty feet top by stone wall. The commandant was Prayagji Anant Phanase[38] of Prabhu community. He was a old servant of Bhosale for many years. He had been commandant both at Satara and Parali. The fort, however, was only provided for two months. Parashuram Trimbak held the fort of Parali, only six miles away, and succeeded in gaining the secret co-operation of the Prince, Azim Shah. He had allowed convoys of and ammunition to pass from Parali into Satara. In order to attract the garrison to the spot, the emperor decked

himself. He was accompanied by a splendid retinue and himself carried on a portable throne below the north-eastern corner of the fort.

Prayagji Phanase thinking the procession to be some religious celebration crowded to the edge. Instantly the first mine was fired. A vast mass of stone rose in air, carrying with it two hundred of the garrison. When the second mine was fired and the emperor hoped that its explosion would open a further breach for attacking, unfortunately the mine exploded in the wrong direction, but falling outwards showered on the heads of the unhappy Mughals. The entire storming party was swept away. Prayagji had vigorously opposed the Mughals, and disputed every foot of ground as they pushed forward their advanced posts. Prayagji who had been sitting under a tree near the north-eastern side obsdian had been blown up when the first mine exploded. By great good luck some rocks, as they fell, formed an arch on his body. He was able to call his men, who after considerable labour dug him out unhurt. The divisions on the west and south faces raised batteries but grand attack was directed against the northeastangle.

Saki Mustaid Khan remarks that, what appeared like the wall of the fort was entirely a rock 30 yards in height and above it loose stones were placed. There was no wall which could be shaken by bombardment. The

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only progress made so far by the Mughals was that, the Khan mounted the small cannon on the raised wooden platform and that its firing compelled the Marathas to sit down in hiding behind the walls of the forts.[39]

Meanwhile an attempt to scale the wall was made but it failed. So, the Emperor employed 2,000 Mavals infantry expert in capturing forts. He paid Rs. 1,36,000 as an advance salary for three years. They were supplied with all the necessary material, and they started scaling the wall. At that time a contingent of 200 Marathas was coming to the fort for reinforcing the garrison. They noticed the attempt of the Mughals and alerted the garrison by raising shouts. Thus, the Mavals had to give up their efforts. Because of their failure, the Mughals chased the Marathas and killed some of them.

In April 1700 a grand assault was planned by the Marathas. A band of the Marathas left Parali in the night to reinforce the garrison of Satara. Ruhullah Khan and Fatehullah Khan noticed their movement and intercepted them. The Marathas attacked the trenches of Fatehullah Khan. The Khan was wounded while five Marathas were killed. Tarabiyat Khan and Hamiduddin Khan now advanced to attack the garrison. But Marathas opened the fire and rolled down heavy stones on them. The raised battery for which the Mughals had worked

so hard had also fallen down and the cannon placed on it overturned on the hill-side. At the very time the Emperor suspected the Prince's collusion with the Marathas and he had established a strong outpost near Parli to prevent the help.[40] Azam Shah wrote to Parashuram Trimbak warning him that, in future he would seize all supplies meant for the besieged. Marathas were passing through a critical time. Their king had died and a temporary dejection had seized them. They also thought that the fort of Satara would not be held for long time in the adverse circumstances. At the very time, the wall of the fort on the side of the trenches of Tarabiyat Khan was demolished.[41] The imperial artillery had mounted a big ghun. Fatehullah Khan had run the trenches right to the gate of the fort and would break it by heavy firing. Baji Dafale ran up to the top of wall shouting 'Come up! There are no enemies here!

While the Emperor was having a hard time in blowing out the rocks of the fort, the Marathas were ravaging the regions ousting the garrisons from the Mughal's outposts. They had captured their thanedars intercepting and looting the supplies coming to the imperial camp. Saki Musteid Khan writes that countless Marathas outside the fort fell on the provisions and burnt the grass for 20 miles around. The imperialists ran extremely short of food and fodder in their camp.

Parashuram Trimbak was at the fort of Parali, watching the developments of the Emperor, and fort would break by heavy firing. He came out of Parali and sought the Emperor's pardon through the mediation of Ruhallah Khan.[42]

But Parashuram Trimbak's letter, written on the very second day of the explosion (April 14) reveals that it was the Emperor who first started the negotiations, and asked Ruhallah Khan on his part and sent his emissary Vithoji Patil to Parashuram Trimbak. The Satara garrison had already been passing through a critical situation. Hence Parashuram Trimbak lost no time in responding to the move of the Emperor. He sent his emissary Antoji Apdeo to the Emperor.[43] The negotiation between the Emperor and Parashuram Trimbak were secretly carried out so as to keep up the prestige of the Emperor unharmed.

It was declared that it was Subhanji, the Killedar of the fort, who sent a message through the mediation of the prince to the Emperor. He had been willing to hand over the fort, provided the Emperor allowed the Marathas to vacate it with their lives and property. The request was granted and men and women were allowed to go away from the fort. On April 21, 1700 the Imperial flag was hoisted on the fort, which was named 'Azim

Tara'. Subhanji was brought with his hand and neck tied, to the court. Emperor released him and granted Mansub.[44] Many of his followers accepted the imperial service. On April 22, 1700 the Emperor visited the fort and said the two-fold prayer of thanks in old Mosque. After this the Emperor sent Fatehullah Khan to open trenches before Parali which was only six miles west of Satara. The fort was besieged by Aurangzeb and renamed Nur-e-Satara.[45]

Soon afterwards the Satara fort was retaken by the Marathas in 1704. It again became the seat of Maratha Chhatrapati Shahu who was the first Chhatrapati of Satara. When Satara and Vasantgad were taken by Parashuram Trimbak Satara was surprised by the artifice of a Brahmin named Annajipant. This man escaped from prison at Jinji and assumed the character of medicant devotee. He joined a party of Mughal infantry marching to relieve the Satara garrison. Annajipant, who had been a writer attached to body of Mavali infantry, saw with the aid of a few old friends that the place might be surprised. He watched his chance, told Parashuram Trimbak of his design. He had introduced a body of Mavalis into the fort. The enterprising and remorseless Brahmin put every man of the garrison to the sword.

Maratha Kingdom, 1700-1708:

After the death of Rajaram, the important task before the Marathas was the selection of a successor of Rajaram. He had left behind three sons, two legitimate and one illegitimate, Karna. The case of succession to Rajaram was not a normal one because Rajaram's status was not that of a king by his own right. After the murder of Sambhaji his only son Shahu was looked upon as a rightful heir. But since he was an infant and prisoner, Rajaram was by common consent appointed his regent. He was only a stop-gapping. Rajaram himself did not perform coronation and he did not sit on the throne out of respect for Shahu's claim. Shahu was legitimate successor was a fact which Ramchandra Pant and even Tarabai had never disputed. Rajaram and Ramchandrapant made strenuous efforts to get Shahu back from the Mughal camp. But Tarabai summoned a council of state on behalf of her son Shivaji-II. She demanded his recognition as the King of Marathas.

The change in her attitude had taken place on the birth of her son. There were three factions at the Maratha court. The first pursuing Rajaram's honest policy recognized Shahu as legitimate. The second favoured Tarabai and her son, and the third stood for Rajaram's junior wife and her son Sambhaji-II. Ramchandrapant

protested that the true king was Shahu on whose behalf Rajaram had ruled. But high spirited Tarabai impatiently brushed aside his objectives and insisted that her son Shivaji should be crowned as King. She won over to her side the rising soldiers and politicians, Parashuram Trimbak and Shankaraji Narayan. But both advised Ramchandrapant to make compromise with Tarabai for the sake of national interest. A few months later Shivaji-II was crowned as Chhatrapati at Vishalgad on 10 March 1700.[46]

Tarabai concentrated all power in her own hands and personally looked to such important affairs of state as appointments and change of generals, cultivation of the country and the planning of raids into the Mughal territories. She chose her own men to carry on the war and conduct the administration of the country. Ramchandra Nilkanth continued to be her Amatya but having failed to see eye to eye with her. Dhanaji Jadhav also continued to serve her but he was also in the same mood. Tarabai removed Timaji Raghunath from the post of Pratinidhi and gave it to Parashuram Trimbak; she removed Shankar Malhar from the post of Pant-Sachiv and gave it to Shankar Narayan. After the coronation of her son she threw Rajasbai and her son Sambhaji into prison. Tarabai had inherited the military talents and energy of her father Hambirrao Mohite. She was

everywhere encouraging her officers, planning campaigns and attaining victories. She was equally welcom on the battlefield.

> *She was a clever and intelligent woman and had obtained a reputation during her husband's life time for her knowledge of civil and military matters ... Tarabai as the wife of Rajaram enjoyed great powers and command on government and with the spread of the war day-by-day the power of the Marathas increased.*[47]

It is due to skilful handling that the Emperor was able to capture only four major forts after the death of Rajaram. Those wwere Satara (21 April, 1700), Panhala (28 May, 1701), Vishalgad (4 June, 1702), Sinhagad (8 April, 1703). Aurangzeb had taken the chief forts of the Marathas but he was farthern than ever from the conquest of the Marathas. In a short time the Maratha counter-offensive directed to be more effective and threatened the Mughal Empire. In 1705 Maratha armies crossed the Narmada. Namji Shinde ravaged central India. Khanderao plundered Gujarath and Ahmedabad. During this time disruption of the Mughal Empire had begun. The Bundelas under Chhatrasal asserted their independence. The Rajputs were all combined in revolt. Thus, in his last days Aurangzeb was a broken man.

The continual disasters broke the spirit of Mughal army in Maharashtra. They were becoming weaker and weaker every day. Aurangzeb had no longer hoped to conquer Maharashtra and reached Ahmednagar. The Marathas had beaten back the invader from the north and all was safe in Maharashtra.

> *The twenty years' war brought happy termination. Aurangzeb stirred the people of Maharashtra to their innermost depths and it was the bad discipline of this war ... without revenue, without armies, without resources of any kind they managed to raise armies, retake forts and develop a system of conquest by which they regained not only the Swarajya but also the right of levying Chauthai and Sardeshmukhi all over the Deccan and the Karnatak ... This war of Independence will always remain the most glorious period of Maratha History.*[48]

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CHAPTER TWO

SHAHU: EARLY LIFE AND ACTIVITIES

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After the death of Rajaram his wife Tarabai became all in all in the administration of Maharashtra. She got her son Shivaji coronated on the fort Vishalgad. The war against the Mughals contined on all sides. Some leaders like Ramchandrapant and Dhanaji had continued their contact with Shahu, Sambhaji's son, who was still in the Mughal camp. It was in these circumstances that Zulfiqar Khan suggested to Prince Azam that to divert the attention of Maratha leaders from warfare against the Mughal, Shahu's release should be effected.

Shahu and his mother Yesubai were well protected in the Mughal camp. They remained in the camp for almost eighteen years. Sufficient number of servants were provided to them with sufficient amount of allowances in order to keep them comfortable. Aurangzeb himself treated them kindly. He never forced them for embracing Islam. His daughter Zinat-Un-nissa treated Shahu as almost her son. All this had a very good effect on the mind of Shahu who even after becoming Chhatrapati always cherished the good memory of the Mughal Raj.

Shahu's Captivity - Early Life:

Shahu was the grandson of Shivaji and son of Sambhaji. His childhood was spent in the Emperor

Aurangzeb's camp. He had ordered that Shahu and his mother should be accommodated in enclosed quarters near his daughter and adjoining his own tent.[1] The kindnd-ness of the Emperor's daughter was greatly instrumental in ensuring the safety of Yesubai and her son.

To the Maratha Sardars attached to Shahu's camp Aurangzeb assigned sufficient subsistence allowance. Shahu was the legitimate Maratha king, so he gave him the title 'Raja' with nominal dignity of seven thousand commanders. In the Emperor's camp Jotyaji Kesarkar, Bhikaji and Bangoji Gaikwad kept close touch with Shahu. They were constantly exchanging messages with Rajaram and other Maratha leaders also.

Jotyaji Kesarkar was responsible for the education of Shahu in Mughal camp.[2] In the imprisonment Shahu had practised some riding, hunting and sdwordsmanship within the limits of the camp. He learnt to write Modi script. He did not know Sanskrit or traditional Hindu mythology.[3] On the contrary he developed respect for Muslim faith and Mughal court pattern. Besides that Zinat-Un-nissa Begum took deep interest in Yesubai and her son and was certainly instrumental in letting Shahu go back to the Deccan from the river Narmada in 1707.

The Emperor asked Shahu jokingly, whether he would like to live with him or go back to his uncle.

Shahu replied that his uncle was his enemy. He would like to go back when the emperor secured the throne for him after defeating his uncle.[4] Like Shahu Yesubai also showed an attitude of hostility towards Rajaram to the Emperor. But actually Shahu had a fairly large party with him and tried to contact his uncle and Maratha Sardars.

Shahu's real name was Shivaji. Aurangzeb called him Shivaji the 'Sav' (honest) in contrast with his wily grandfather.[5] He, therefore, continued to be known as Shahu. Shahu's troubles increased beyond measure particularly after 1699. The news of Rajaram's premature death distressed Shahu. Shahu heard it, however with heartfelt grief which produced an effect on his mind and body.[6] Shahu fell ill and was for a time confined to bed. He had protracted fever which gave rise to serious anxiety in the minds of Begum and Yesubai. Even the old Emperor felt uneasy when he heard the serious illness of Shahu. Aurangzeb paid a visit to Shahu and sat by his side for a long time.

"Raje, you look very weak and pale" he said. Hafiz Amber who was standing by said, "The Raje did not touch dal and rice".[7] This dyspesia leading to fever and jaundice seems to have troubled Shahu long. Emperor was trying to console the Prince assuring him that he would be restored to his raj. Shahu's position

became miserable, when Emperor sat down near Satara. He captured fort Satara during the monsoon months.

In 1703 two suitable brides - one from Shinde family of Kanerkhed named Ambikabai, and the other the daughter of Manaji Rustumrao Jadhav, named Rajasbai - were selected for Shahu and Shahu married them with fitting ceremony under the Emperor's direction.[8] Aurangzeb took much interest in the matter and celebrated the marriage with due pomp and dignity. The old Emperor called Shahu and his wives to his presence and gave them his sincere blessings. On this occasion the Begum and Yesubai dressed one maid-servant of good looks, named Virubai as the real bride and sent her with Shahu to the presence of the Emperor. Shahu afterwards became very much fond of this maidservant and always kept her with him.[9] Begum insisted that the ceremony should be performed in a manner worthy of "King of the Marathas". After the marriage Shahu received Jagir for the five Paraganas of Akankole, Indapur, Supa, Baramati and Nevasa from the Emperor.[10] He was also pleased to gift one gold hilted sword naming it the Bhawani Sword of Shivaji.[11]

There was another incident which Shahu had faced. After capturing the fort of Sinhagad in April 1703 the Emperor stayed at Poona during the months of Monsoon. The question of Shahu's conversion was pursued by Aurangzeb. He issued the orders that on a certain day Shahu

should be converted to the Muslim faith. This measure dreadfully distressed Shahu and his mother. They gave up food and began to starve. They begged the Begum Sahiba to intervene in their favour and plead with the Emperor to cancel his orders.[12] Emperor permitted that Shahu would be spared on condition that two prominent Maratha youths should offer themselves for conversion. Khandoji and Jagjivan, two sons of Prataprao Gujar offered themselves for this sacrifice. They were Shahu's companions in the captivity in the Emperor's camp. Shahu later on gave these two men in Inam the village of Salgaon[13] which is near Parli.

In the period of captivity, Shahu had constantly undergone the same privations and hardship as the fighting members of the Emperor's camp did. In addition he had been closely watched prisoner, a pawn in the Emperor's game to be utilized as occasion would require. Aurangzeb deliberately adopted an attitude quite the reverse of that he had adopted in the case of his father. Due to the surroundings Shahu knew more of the Muslim religion than of his own. But his mind grew alert, quick and watchful. He had plenty of thrilling experiences and acquired commonsense, and discerning faculty to assess correctly the situation. The life in the Mughal camp was sufficiently varied and not altogether monotonous and Shahu freely participated it. G.S. Sardesai says

that -

> *Shahu developed an altogether soft and effeminate character although he never lost his innate love and warmth of heart towards his own people. He also possessed enough commonsense, practical wisdom in judging men and matters, and above all an intensely obliging and generous nature. He was always afraid of commiting sin or doing wrong.*[14]

After the death of Rajaram the friction and rivalry of a serious nature went on dividing the loyalties of common man. It is in this period that Shahu came to cultivate a more or less intimate contact with some of the local families, particularly money-lenders. These families often satisfied his immediate needs of money and did other services to relieve him from his difficulties. The last years of Aurangzeb's life were fearfully clouded with darkness about the future of the Deccan. Extreme misery and want prevailed in the Mughal camp. Shahu and his mother, with their followers had been reduced in these last years of the Emperor's life. Yesubai had written a letter to Shrine of Moraya Dev of Chinchwad explaining her position in the following words:

> *My son Daji has accompanied the emperor and we were sent here along with Janana for some five months. We are here in a dreadful*

predicament caused by want of provisions and cash. ...

In this extremity we approach Your Holiness. If you can kindly send me a loan of seven thousand rupees with the bearer Rayaji Jadhav.

... Trusting you will not disappoint me.[15]

Balaji Vishvanath who was the Deshmukh of Shriwardhan had a friendly relation with Shahu during this hard period of captivity. His diplomatic skill and circumspect conduct in the interest of his own position were useful to him. He also formed the friendship with several Mughal officials of high rank. It is said that he had secret means of approach to Begum Zinat-Un-nissa. He guarded Shahu's interest with great risk to his own life. Raybhanji Kaka[16] who was in Mughal employment, helped Shahu to the best of his abilities. The Emperor often employed him as a medium of communication with Maratha government. Raybhanji lived to see Shahu properly crowned at Satara at a later date. Shahu remembered and repaid every act of kindness shown to him by his Maratha friends during this hard period of captivity. Thus, Shahu maintained the relation with Maratha Sardars and appealed to all of them. At last Shahu was released to create a division among the Marathas.

Release of Shahu and Ascendance:

Thus, Shahu's life was spent in the captivity for seventeen years. Aurangzeb did not succeed in destroying the Maratha state and power. In the period of captivity of Shahu, the Emperor showed deep interest and great concern in the well-being of Shahu. Aurangzeb thought that the best means of closing the war was to release Shahu and send him to claim from his aunt. The Emperor's anxiety at this time was two-fold. One was to ensure the peaceful succession to his throne after his death and the other to consolidate the Marathas by offering them such terms as they could accept. On 27 November 1703[17] the Emperor called Shahu and entrusted his person to Kambaksh with instruction to open negotiation with Dhanaji Jadhav about the release of Shahu.[18] Dhanaji Jadhav was consulted and he offered to close the war on condition that the Maratha King should have the right to levy chauth and sardeshmukhi dues upon six Subhas of the Deccan. In lieu of that the Marathas would protect the country. Dhanaji also agreed to take charge of Shahu and swear allegiance to the Emperor that Maratha Kingdom had been restored to Shahu as a recognised feudatory of supreme Mughal authority.[19] These terms were agreed to and invitations were sent round to the chiefs of the Maratha army. When Emperor saw

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huge Maratha Sardars' assemblage, his suspicious nature became alarmed and he broke up the negotiations.[20]

It appears from this negotiation that Dhanaji and Shahu were on contact since long. This account also explains the result of the battle of Khed in 1707 and Dhanaji's quick desertion of Tarabai's cause. Shahu wrote personal letters to some of the Maratha leaders inviting thems to join him. He ordered Shahu to go and rule his Kingdom in obedience to Kambaksh. Shahu's residential tents were removed and pitched in Zulfiqar-khan's quarters on February 6, 1706. But no Maratha chief came to join Shahu. Zulfiqarkhan was secretly instructed to watch his movements.

In 1707 the death of Aurangzeb made a political mark in the history of the Marathas, because of the relese of Shahu. It is difficult for the Marathas to do justice to Aurangzeb. His conduct towards Shivaji and Sambhaji was treacherous and cruel. His kindness towards Shahu was prompted by political rather than charitable motives. Prince Azim Shah being the nearest to the grand army,[21] assumed the command of the Deccan Army. He marched towards the north contented for the throne with his brother. Shahu continued his captivity in the camp of Azim Shah. At the same time taking that opportunity Tarabai and her opponents became active

in Maharashtra. Dhanaji Jadhav defeated Lodikhan, an officer of the Mughals. Tarabai began to weave further scheme for the extension of her son's dominion. When Mughal troops crossed Narmada, Zulfiqarkhan, the Mughal sardar, advised Azim Shah to release Shahu and send him to his homeland to claim his right to his aunt. This master stroke of policy was to create a division among the Marathas and start civil war between Shahu and the ambitious Tarabai. Zinat-Un-nissa Begum was certainly instrumental in letting Shahu go back to the Deccan from the river Narmada[22] at Doraha.

Zulfiqarkhan arranged the meeting in 1707 in the presence of Azam Shah.[23] He had released Shahu on conditions which were agreed upon by Shahu. The conditions were:

1 Shahu should rule the small Swarajya of his grandfather as vassal of the Mughal. Shahu should leave behind him as hostage his surviving wife, his mistress Virubai, his mother Yesubai and his illegitimate half brother Madansing.

2 He had to serve as feudatory whenever he was called upon to do so with his troops.

3 In return Azim Shah granted him the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi of the six subhas of Deccan - these

were Khandesh, Berar, Aurangabad, Bedar, Haiderabad and Bijapur. Shahu was also appointed governor of Gondwana, Guzarat and Tanjore in addition to his paternal Kingdom during good behaviour.[24]

In fact there is no record of any grant made to Raja Shahu when he was released from Mughal captivity. According to Chitnis,[25] orders were issued to the governor of the Deccan, that the old Maratha Kingdom was restored to Shahu.

Shahu was released at Doraha near Nemawar to the north of Narmada.[26] Shahu did not wait for the sanad and left Mughal camp on 8 May 1707. But due to the absence of the record it is not understood as to what role did Yesubai, the mother of Shahu play in this matter. Shahu accepted the Mughal vassalage and thereby reduced the Swarajya to the status of subordinate state in Mughal Empire. He never gave up the Mughal vassalage in his life-time.[27] But due to the stable position Shahu sought the support of the Mughal Empire and also secured the status of an independent king. His personal attendant Jotyaji Kesarkar went with Yesubai to Delhi with a view that he might get sanad from the Emperor. But the events, however, turned out contrary.

Thus, Shahu found himself free even though he had accepted the Mughal vassalage. The timing of his release was particularly unfortunate for Maratha cause.

The rival party in Maratha state suddenly confronted with a new king, a man of twentyfive. In the captivity he had contact with the outside world. His followers mixed freely with Maratha sardars in Mughal service. They managed to slip in and out of the camp itself with message from Shahu and his mother. Shahu was a prisoner and yet he was not shut off from the outside world. He was frequently seen and spoken to by so many Maratha sardars. So, his identity could not be doubted. Shahu took the shortest route to Bijangad and Sultanpura in Western Khandesh and crossed Narmada. Mohansing Raval of Bijangad received him with open arms.[28] He helped Shahu with money and troops. On Tapi river Aba Pandye joined Shahu. He addressed many sardars announcing his arrival and asking them to join him.

Lamkani marks a landmark in the history of Shahu. It is here that he made his presence felt in Maharashtra and established his claim to the throne. Shahu stayed at Lakmani and followed the support of Haibatrao Nimbalkar and Nemaji Shinde, the most powerful Maratha chieftains. Sajan Singh, the chief of Lamkani promised Shahu his support. He encouraged the Zamindars and Sardars appealing their loyalty to Shahu. Bapuji Sonadev, Pingale, Parsoji Bhosale were the earliest among them who joined Shahu.[29] Parsoji eating publicly of the same plate with Shahu dispelled all popular doubts about Shahu being an imposter

and not real son of Sambhaji.[30] He was the ancestor of the later Bhosale ruler of Nagpur. Shahu got additional support from such important personages as Haibat Rao Nimbalkar, Nemaji Shinde, Chimanaji Damodar and had sufficiently strengthened his position.

The following is a specimen of the letters sent by Shahu to Maratha officers and nobles as he advanced:

From Maharaja Shahu -

To Maloji Jedhe Deshmukh of Rohidkhore.

I the Maharaja am pleased to offer you as follows:

I am at present at Chorwad District Utran in Khandesh. I am advancing by rapid marches. You have long served the crown. Come therefore now and serve us with your followers. When we meet we shall consider how best we can reward you. Fail not to act as we did you.[31]

Afterwards Shahu marched to Ahmednagar and prepared for the coming struggle against Tarabai.

Shahu tried to avoid conflict against Tarabai, and marched towards Poona. He gained his first victory at Parad in Maharashtra. The Patil of the village was killed and his widow brought her little son to Shahu. Shahu looking upon the encounter as his first victory gave the boy the name Fatehsingh Bhosale. This boy

came to play an important part at Shahu's court. This little incident illustrates the soft and kindly vein in Shahu's character. In October 1707 Shahu knew that Tarabai's forces were marching against him, and he moved towards Khed near Poona.

Shahu and Tarabai met as enemies at Khed-Kadus and battle of Khed was fought. Dhanaji Jadhav was commander of Tarabai's force and was accompanied by Parashuram Pant Pratinidhi. Shahu had no capable military leader to lead. Khando Ballal was trusted colleague of Dhanaji Jadhav and persuaded him to pay a secret visit to Shahu.[32] The result of an overnight meeting was that Dhanaji was influenced by Shahu's charming personality and made up his mind to go over to Shahu. Dhanaji Jadhav had given an understanding to Shahu that he would join him. In 1707 a battle on the banks of Bhima was fought and Dhanaji Jadhav remained neutral. It was clear that Shahu was to win the battle of Khed. After that battle Shahu assumed the title "Kshatriya Kulavatansa Shri Shahu Chhatrapati".[33] The Pratinidhi who had to fight single handed on behalf of Tarabai was badly beaten and he fled away to Satara.

After this success Shahu lost no time and marched to Satara. Dhanaji Jadhav openly joined Shahu. His desertion gave the signal to many other chiefs among whom were Khando Ballal, Chitnis and Bahirao Pant Pingle.[34]

While halting at Shirwal, Shahu called upon Shankaraji Narayan to tell him about the consequences of refusal. But for the fear of Tarabai he put an end to his life.[35] Sachiv unexpectedly placed all fortresses under him in Shahu's hands. Shahu conferred the hereditary office of Sachiv to his son. Thus, the whole country at the north of Bhima came in his possession. The finishing touch to these acquisitions was given when Chandan Wandan opened its gates and his conquest of northern Maharashtra was complete.[36]

Shahu then made up his mind to make Satara the seat of Maratha capital which was under the control of Tarabai's government. Shahu sent off a peremptory demand to Pratinidhi to surrender, but Pratinidhi politely declined. Shahu now discovered that military commander of the fort Shaikh Mira, was under the command of Pratinidhi. Shahu planned to capture his family at Wai and bring them to Satara. Shahu sent his message to Shaikh Mira that if the fort was not surrendered within eight days his family will be destroyed. In his desperation Shaikh Mira opened the gates of fort Satara for Shahu on Saturday in December 1707. Thus, after seven months of his release Shahu reached Satara.[37]

With the fall of Satara Shahu made himself supreme authority of Maratha state. And the nation got back

its king after a long and heroic struggle. The coronation ceremony was duly performed on 12 January 1708[38] With all customary pomp and rituals. The new king next proceeded to make fresh appointments to the various Ministerial offices for administration. He did not forget, in the hour of his glory, those who he owed his success. Parsoji Bhosale was given the title of Sena-Saheb-Subha and a sumptuous Jahagir to maintain his rank. Balaji Vishvanath was appointed Mutaliq to the Amatya Amburao Hanamante, and Dhanaji Jadhav was appointed as Senapati.

After the coronation Shahu resolved to visit Parali in person and win to his cause the powerful spsiritual aids of Ramdas followers. The saint on his death had resigned the management of Ramchandra temple to his female disciple 'Akka'. She received Shahu and acknowledged him as Sambhaji's son. She next begged that she would free her in old age from the arduous task assigned to her and give it Gangadhar Swami, the grandson of Ramdas's elder brother. Shahu agreed and sent a palanquin with an escort to fetch Gangadhar. At Satara the king consoled himself by marrying two new girls. One was the mild and gentle Sagunabai, the second was the naughty and imperious Sakawarbai both of whom were daughters of Shirke's house. By this marriage he no doubt wished to renew the friendship of Shirkes.[39]

Civil War - Shahu and Tarabai:

Shahu's return was an invitation to civil war between Shahu and ambitious Tarabai. Marathas knew that Shahu was a real ruler but Tarabai purposefully made Shahu imposter and declared him so repeatedly but that did not work in her favour. When Shahu arrived in Maharashtra he sent a message to his aunt for the claim of his kingship. But Tarabai declared Shahu an imposter[40] for the cause of strengthening her position. Shahu tried to avoid conflict against Tarabai. But Tarabai denied that and wished to meet him the same fate which the former imposter met. But this stand did not appeal much to the Maratha leaders. They had maintained personal contact with Shahu in Mughal captivity. Maratha Sardar Khando Ballal and Bapuji Bhosale had seen Shahu in the Mughal camp and knew that Shahu was a real successor; they ascertained the identity of Shahu.

Tarabai's declaration that Rajaram won the Gadhi after Sambhaji lost it, did not appeal to the Maratha Sardars who knew Shahu well. When Rajaram himself accepted Shahu Tarabai had no right to reject him. Rajaram had taken special pains to emphasize his role of a care-taker. Even his death-bed message enjoined his followers to remain true to Shahu. Tarabai was too strong-willed but she had always suspected her courtiers. The result

was that chieftains on their part were uncertain about their prestige and position. Shahu tried to avoid conflict against Tarabai and marched towards Satara. But Tarabai ordered Dhanaji Jadhav and Parashuram Pant Pratinidhi to check his onward march. The result was the battle of Khed. At the battle of Khed they joined Shahu and Shahu's position as kind was, thus, stabilized.

After the coronation of Shahu in 1708 he faced many problems. During all these days the domestic feuds made Shahu's position precarious. The most difficult problem was how to safeguard his own interest against Tarabai. She had been defeated but not crushed. But he was by temperament incapable of any stern action. Tarabai's cabinet were no longer with Dhanaji Jadhav, the army chief. Khando Ballal, the secretary, had defected to Shahu, the Sachiv had committed suicide, Parashuram Pant Pratinidhi was prisoner in Shahu's hand and she became helpless. At the very time Shahu seriously thought of ceding the whole country to the south of Warana to Tarabai's son, Shivaji. While Tarabai was preparing for the battle against Shahu while he was thinking for amicable settlement. On 16 January 1708 exactly four days after his coronation he sent a draft treaty to his cousin Shivaji[41] -

(1) Shivaji should hand over to Shahu all the forts

and military posts lying to the north of the river Warana from its confluence with Krishna including the districts of Miraj and Bijapur.

(2) That Shahu on his part would transfer to Shivaji all the forts and military posts that lay south of this line.

(3) That in the coastal districts of Konkan the territory south and Salsi all the way upto the Panchmahals and Ankola would come under Shivaji.

(4) That there should be no recriminations against chieftains and commanders - small or big - for having loyalty to one or the other side but that in future neither side should give asylum to defections from the other.

Shahu, on his part wanted to shut off the quarrel, which was disturbing the entire Maratha world. There was so little to choose between the two rivals - Shahu and tarabai. The result was that, the Marathas never plunged whole heartedly into the warfare between the two fractions. Tarabai rejected the terms and formed a new plan to renew the contest. She released Ramchandra Pant from Vasantgad and won him over to her side. She also secured the support of Savant of Sawantwadi, Kanhoji Angre, Sidhoji Ghorpade.[42] These war-like preparations

forced Shahu's hands and he embarked upon a campaign against her.

Shahu directed his force toward Panhala. Tarabai tried equally to hold her position, but Shahu took Panhala in 1708 and Tarabai fled to Rangna. Tarabai after standing in siege of three months had to run away from Rangna because Sawant and Angre did not arrive for her help. There was secret correspondence and was opened with Dhanaji Jadhav, Khando Ballal and others with a view to persuading them to desert Shahu.[43] But they were more interested in their Jagir than in fighting the battles of their King. Shahu ordered the siege operation to be stopped and returned to Panhala. Nilo Ballal was placed in charge of newly conquered territory.[44] Thus ended the campaign in partial success.

Shahu had an intention of resuming the siege after the rains. But for want of help from Bombay Governor, and doubt of loyalty of the Senapati, Dhanaji's son Chandrasen Jadhav[45] Shahu withdrew the troops. Tarabai fixed her headquarters at Kolhapur and it appeared that hostilities would now subside between Shahu and Tarabai. The two parties would have probably lived in peace, but for the arrival of Bahadur Shah in the Deccan towards the end of 1708.

Prince Muazzam had defeated Azam Shah and ascended the throne under the title of Bahadurshah. Shahu paid

his homage to the new emperor and in return Bahadurshah confirmed him in his possessions and elevated him to the Mansab of ten thousand.[46] Bahadurshah marched into Deccan against Kambuksh and Emperor was successful in the contest with the help of Shahu. Shahu took the advantage and asked for the grant of Sardeshmukhi and Chauth of the six Subhas of Deccan.[47] At the very time Tarabai's agent upset the whole plan, and Emperor accepted Munimkhan's suggestion that Shahu and Tarabai should fight among them. The Sardeshmukhi right would be granted to the winner.[48] And due to Tarabai's obstacles the question had remained unsolved. Shahu and Tarabai made preparation to fight to finish. Before this Tarabai had rejected the claim of Shahu.

When Shahu stabilized his position and made his ministry the complications between Chandrasen and Balaji Vishwanath arose. Shahu supported Balaji and Chandrasen Jadhav due to the high insult left the service. Tarabai had to take the fullest advantage and made contact with Senapati. Chandrasen Jadhav offered her his support and made military revolt against Shahu. He wrote a letter to Tarabai and mentioned the names of persons in the Shahu's court whom he had persuaded and encouraged.[49] But Chandrasen was unable to carry out his plan against Shahu. He was not a capable leader. It was due to her encouragement that some of the Maratha

chieftains rose in open rebellion against Shahu. But Shahu's Kingdom was saved by Balaji Vishwanath. He managed to restore the balance in Shahu's favour by inflicting military defeats or by friendly persuasions. Afterwards Tarabai did not achieve success against Shahu.

At the same time at Panhala the agents of Rajasbai (Rajaram's second wife) managed to put Tarabai under arrest and placed Rajasbai's son Sambhaji on the throne.[50] The bloodless revolution was brought about in Kolhapur in 1714 by overthrowing Tarabai. Ramchandrapant joined the party of Rajasbai and with the help of Balaji and other Sardars of Kolhapur succeeded in throwing Tarabai and her son into prison.[51] They succeeded in setting up Sambhaji and Rajasbai in their place. Sambhaji received valuable assistance from Shahu, and thus Shahu became free from the troubles of Tarabai. Afterwards Tarabai became prisoner of Shahu in 1731.

Chhatrapati's Early Activities - 1708-1720:

After the coronation Shahu faced many problems. During all these days the domestic feuds made Shahu's position precarious. Shahu stabilized his position against Tarabai which had sufferred earlier. As a Chhatrapati, Shahu initiated measures to improve administration under his control though he had made his Rajmandal. But he was surrounded

by his internal enemies like Damaji Thorat Khatavkar, Angre, Sawant, etc.. To continue his position there was a need for good supporters, and he appealed first rate administrators and diplomats. Balaji Vishvanath was revenue officer under Ramchandrapant Amatya. He was also mentioned as a revenue collector working under the Senapati Dhanaji Jadhav. Shahu and Balaji became well attached to each other since Shahu's captivity. After the death of Senapati Dhanaji Jadhav, his son Chandrasen Jadhav was appointed as Senapati. As a safe-guard against possible treachery by the new Senapati, Shahu appointed Balaji Vishvanath as 'Senakarte' (Organizer of force), a new office formed for this.[52] Balaji had exhibited an uncommon grasp of political situation, and rendered invaluable service to Shahu.

Shahu and Chandrasen Jadhav:

Due to Balaji's astute diplomacy he became foremost in the administration of Shahu's regime.

Balaji was aspiring for Senakarte post and Chandrasen was aspiring for Senapati post and both wanted to be independent from each other's authority.[53] It is true that this arrangement increased their enmity and made them openly violent towards each other. Shahu supported Balaji in his quarrel against Senapati and thus Senakarte was saved on this occasion from Chandrasen's wrath.[54] Chandrasen sent a strong threat to the King that unless

Balaji was delivered into his hands, he would quit his service. Shahu had no alternative. He determined to support Balaji against the insolent Senapati, whose loyalty was not firm. After this Chandrasen joined Daudkhan at Bahadurgad.[55]

The controversy between Balaji and Chandrasen made Shahu's position miserable. After a quarrel between Chandrasen and Balaji, Balaji fled towards the bank of Nira. Chandrasen's men were soon on his track. In the feud between Chandrasen and Balaji Vishwanath, Chandrasen, in the beginning was in the ascendency. Balaji fled to Pavangad. He requested Shahu to protect him. Shahu escorted Balaji and brought him to Satara.[56]

The desertion of Chandrasen and Balaji created sensation amongst the partisans of Shahu. Most of them tended only playing double game; most of them paid only a lip homage to Shahua to promote their own interest. The chiefs like Sawant of Wadi, Angre, Khanderao Dabhade had declared support for Tarabai. And in the very ranks of Shahu's partisans Chandrasen was going seditious. Shivaji II wrote a letter to Shahu on 27 August 1711 that -

> *My devotion is for the feet of the Master my desire is for the service of the master. ... The sole desire of my heart, and with this idea in view I win over Rajarshi Appaji*

Thorat, Damaji Thorat, Santaji Pandhare and others. I have showed disaffection towards Shahu. We included the other commanders into the conspiracy and even persuaded the Pratinidhi to join us, when we have marched to Satara and destroyed the root of civil conflict in this kingdom.[57]

Chandrasen Jadhav sent an ultimatum to Shahu, demanding that Parashurampant Pratinidhi and Khanderao Dabhade should be sent to him for negotiations. Shahu sent them in good faith. Chandrasen made use of this visit to draw both into the conspiracy. Tarabai must have been waiting for this development and expressing for the fullest support to the conspiracy.[58]

To see this Chandrasen is positive in his statement, that he never felt the devotion for Shahu. It is also evident that there were other chiefs like Haibatrao Nimbalkar, Damaji Thorat, Santaji Pandhare who had shared his view. Like Chandrasen other Maratha Sardars had written letters to corrupt officers of the fort of Satara.[59] At that time the extreme insecurity of Shahu's position is fully realized.

Thus Shahu's only hope was centred in Balaji. Balaji Vishvanath was a soldier who possessed unrivalled fortitude power of planning and resourcefulness. Bahiropant Pingale, the Peshwa was utterly incapable of handling

a difficult situation. At the very moment Haibatrao Nimbalkar deserted Shahu and he lost at once the service of his Senapati and Sarlashkar. Consequently his army organization suffered and with that his military strength. Shahu had only two thousand men out of the main army that had deserted alongwith the Senapati.[60] Indeed Shahu's military strength was insufficient and there was no commander-in-chief to organise the army. Shahu ordered Balaji to get one for the field to recruit army and keep it ready for action. But for this a vast sum of money was necessary and Shahu had not even a fraction of what was required.[61] Balaji promptly decided to borrow the money from the money-lenders, and recruited an army. To pay off this debt he got from the king an assignment of Jagir yielding twenty-five lakhs a year.[62] Thus Shahu was prepared to meet enemies.

With the separation of Chhatrapati's family Maratha chieftains found themselves in a position which they demanded. As such, their going over to Shahu's side or Tarabai's side was spontaneous. But Shahu defeated one by one all the chieftains who found opportunities to feather their own nest. This situation is graphically described by Vasudevshastri Khare:

> *Their campaigns assumed the forms of a children's game of running in and out. Shahu's position worsened day by day. The Maratha chieftains of the north had joined Shahu's*

> *faction but they were located too far out to be of any real use to Shahu. Even though they continued in the name of the Master, to control extensive tracts around Nagpur, Berar, Khandesh, Shahu himself scarcely controlled a few miles around Satara itself; he was virtually surrounded by the powerful chieftains of Tarabai.*[63]

Shahu had not been paralysed by the dangers of the situation. Recovering from this he proceeded against his conspirators. He ordered Parashurampant, the Pratinidhi, to be put in chain and kept under strict surveillance in 1711.[64] At the same time Balaji crushed the power of Krishnarao Khatavkar, who was Mughal Mansabdar enjoying the title of Maharaj of Khatav. Balaji Vishvanath marched to Khatav and with sudden attack killed him in 1711. The jagir was restored to the son of Khatavkar who sought Shahu's protection.

Udaji Chavan used to make periodic incursions into Shahu's territory near Satara. And Damaji Thorat too, carried out savage depredations into Shahu's territory. Balaji Vishvanath rose to Peshwaship in 1713 and won against Kanhoji Angre. After consulting Shahu, Balaji began operations against Damaji Thorat and Udaji Chavan. Damaji Thorat was taken prisoner in 1718. Udaji was obliged to flee to the protection of Nizam. Thus at home Balaji's resourcefulness had through war or

diplomacy triumphed over every crisis.

Shahu-Kanhoji Angre:

Kanhoji Angre was the admiral of the Maratha fleet. In the contest between Shahu and Tarabai Kanhoji took the side of Tarabai, and in return, he was granted the whole of Konkan between Bombay and Sawantwadi. He started war upon Shahu, and captured several forts above the Ghats belonging to Shahu. Seeing the helpless situation of Shahu, he extended his arms and subdued some portion of Peshwa's jagir.[65] In 1712 Shahu sent Bahiropant Pingle, his Peshwa, to put him down. But Bahiropant was no match for Kanhoji. He seized Peshwa and confined him at Kulaba. Kanhoji was ready to march on the capital of Shahu. At the very time Nizam-ul-Mulk was made the Emperor's Subhedar in the Deccan.

Shahu was at a loss as to how to tackle the situation. He consulted Pratinidhi for appointing new Peshwa. He asked Senakarte Balaji to proceed against Angre and promised him the Peshwaship if he succeeded.[66] Balaji Vishvanath seeing the delicate issue of war and peace, decided to possess the power. Balaji gained his object. Shahu immediately conferred upon him the office of the Peshwa at Manjri near Poona. Thus the 17th of November 1713[67] was a momentous day for it marked the beginning of the transfer of power from the Chhatra-

pati to Peshwa. In due course the other ministerial posts were also filled up and administrative changes made. After the acceptance of Peshwaship, Balaji collected an army for suppressing the pretentions of Kanhoji angre and proceeded towards Lohgad.[68] Kanhoji Angre and Balaji had long been known to each other as friendly neighbours. So, their common friend and secret agent Balaji appealed to Kanhoji's conscience[69] and he decided to try conciliation with him before armed hostilities. In Shahu's suzerainty they would be highly promoted by their joint actions. He urged that Maratha Raj was a sacred legacy left behind by the great Shivaji. Shahu was a generous and large-hearted ruler incapable of harming even an adversary. Kanhoji himself was surrounded by enemies. He could not hold his position without the support of the Central Government. To that Kanhoji should not alienate Shahu's sympathies, and at the same time Balaji promised to stand guarantee as the Peshwa. He would be confirmed by Shahu in his office as 'Sarkhel'. Kanhoji Angre agreed to receive Balaji with the respect and arranged terms.

At Lohgad they came down from the fort and they had cordial meeting at Valvan a suburb of Lonavala early in January 1714.[70] They held a long conference discussing terms of lasting peace between Chhatrapati and Sarkhel. The terms were:

"1 Thorat should not be molested.

2 If some forts of the Mughals in the upcountry area are captured by me, they will be returned to you and if you happen to capture some forts from the Mughals in the low-lying area, they should be returned to me by you.

3 I never intended to be unfaithful to you and shall remain faithful to you in future.

4 If Raigad happens to be captured by me I shall hand it over to you".[71]

Balaji Vishvanath was successful in making a msutually advantageous peace. Kanhoji gave up his defiant attitude towards Shahu and he was very faithful to Shahu. But that settlement made a fresh constitution for the future Maratha expansion and old constitution had fallen. The terms later proved as the basis for a similar settlement with the feudatories. G.S. Sardesai remarks: "The origin of this type of organisation of Maratha Mandal - which later on came to be called the Maratha confederacy - could be traced to the agreement brought about by Balaji between Shahu and Kanhoji". Thus, Maratha confederacy was formed.

The terms having been solemnly agreed to with Shahu the two chiefs proceeded together to Kolaba and the ex-Peshwa Bahiropant was released from confinement. Kanhoji came to pay his respect to Shahu at Satara.[72] With

this treaty Shahu's power and prestige were fast improving. Angrian and the Chhatrapati's possession had provided for mutual cooperation and common defence.

Shahu-Mughal Sanad:

Shahu had been granted by Azam Shah the right to realize the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the six Subhas of the Deccan. But the conferment of these rights had been suspended due to the claim advanced by Tarabai. Rayabhanji Bhosale was Shahu's main supporter and adviser at the Emperor's court. Afterwards in 1709 Bahadurshah had allowed Shahu to levy the chauth and sardeshmukhi contribution in the Southern part of the Imperial territory. But owing to the party feuds at Mughal Court, Farman was not issued to Shahu. Daudkhan, deputy governor of Deccan, had to purchase his peace by promising to Shahu to get chouth and sardeshmukhi for six subhas of Deccan. This was a friendly agreement existed between Shahu and Daudkhan. This agreement was not perhaps, strictly adhered to by his successor, Nizam-ul-Mulk.

Sayyad Hussain Ali's assumption of the viceroyalty of the Deccan formed an important landmark in the history of Chhatrapati. A definite progress was made by Shahu in obtaining official recognition of his claim. Hussain Ali was not aware of the strength of the Marathas. Circumstances so developed that the Sayyid was forced

to appease the Raja Shahu. At that time Shahu, Balaji and Khanderao Dabhade were engaged to wresting the region of Poona from the hands of the Mughal officer and Mughal Emperor encouraged the Marathas for making war against his own viceroy. He thought that this was the only chance to success and way to secure the goodwill and cooperation of Raja Shahu. Because he had tried to secure his position in the Deccan and winning over the Marathas for his own cause. His trusted nobles advised him to open negotiations with Raja Shahu.[73] Shankaraji Malhar, a Maharashtrian Brahmin who was accompanying Husain Ali becomes known to Shahu and his Peshwa Balaji through personal agents and commanders. Hussain Ali deputed Shankaraji to proceed to Satara[74] and secure a friendly relation with Shahu. He had an intention not to close his war with Shahu, but also gain his friendship and military help for his future plan.

Shahu and his counsellors grasped this mission for established a direct contact with Delhi. Shahu wished to put an end to the vaxatious war ever since his release. Shankaraji arrived at Satara, and suggested the solution. He urged that if these roving hands of the Maratha soldiery could be supplied with some suitable employment out of their routine, it would assume some new prospects. Shankaraji further asserted that:

Here are the two powerful Saiyyads holding their hands for friendship; grasp it by all means without hesitation; offer your own terms; they would be ungrudgingly granted; they are hard pressed by danger at the moment. Your king is piou and generous at heart. The Sayyads themselves do not personally contemplate any harm to the Emperor. They only seek to gain sufficient control over the government machinery. Shahu had given his solemn word to the dying Aurangzeb that he would never rise against the Emperor.[75]

The terms offered by Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan to Raja Shahu are not known. But Shahu had been thinking about conciliation and treaty of peace and goodwill, with definite terms. Shahu had another personal reason for falling in line with the plan. His mother, Yesubai, his wife and a number of followers were still held at Delhi as hostages. He was naturally most anxious to get them back. The principal person conducting the negotiations on behalf of Shahu was Balaji Vishvanath. Balaji handed over to the Sayyid the following letter dated September 19, 1717.[76]

Bundah[77]*-Raja Shahoo the solve of Alumgeer Badshah Gazee.*

The requests according to the sequel of Rajah Shahoo, the date 24th Shoowal in the 6th Jaloos (September 19, 1717) written to the Ministers and delivered by Balajee

Pandit.

1st the old Kingdom, according to the two papers with my signature to be given to me upon the date of Sahanuk.

2nd let the Watan of the Sardeshmukhee of the six provinces of the Deccan, according to the sequel, with the tax of 10 per cent be given to me. The province of Aurangabad, Khandesh, Berar with Chandur and Deoghur, the province of Beedar, Darool Zulfur (Beejapore) with the Karnatak and the province of Farcundoh Buniad (Hyderabad).

3rd, Let the fourth part of the six provinces of the Deccan, according to the sequel with 25 per cent be given to me.

4th, If any of my brothers shall come to you do not keep them near you and if any of my servants shall come to you for employment, do not employ them in your service.

5th, Let my mother, my brother, my brother's wife and other persons be brought from the royal presence and delivered over to me.[78]

In the Aitihasik Patravyavahar - No. 6 pp. 8-9 slightly different version of the letter is printed and the same is reproduced below:

Shahu orders (obviously) his Peshwa to secure the following:

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1 Get the Swarajya of Shivaji including Raigad and other forts.

2 Ask for return of some thirteen places.

3 Get chauth of the places which are secured in each Sansthan.

4 Get for Fattehsingh Bhosale, the estate of Nabab Balolkhan.

5 Secure the inclusion in Swarajya of the Kingdom of Chanda seized by Kanhoji Bhosale.

6 Secure the release of mother (Yesubai), Madan Singh, Durgabai, Jankibai and servants.

7 Obtain Firmans in conformity with our past agreement.

8 Get separate Firmans for chauth, for sardeshmukhi for the Western coast.

9 Besides the six Deccan provinces get as much of Gujarat and Malwa as you can.

Husain Ali had agreed to these terms and promised to get them formally ratified by the Emperor. This was an important treaty which Balaji signed for Shahu and it was skilfully diplomatic. Shahu issued the orders to enforce the terms and make collection of chauth and sardeshmukhi.[79] But no Firmans were yet issued to him. In conformity with the promises made by Shahu, his Vakil Yadavrao submitted a petition to the viceroy.

Yadavrao completed the agreement for the payment of Peshkash and fulfilment of the obligations which would entail upon his master on receiving the Sardeshmukhi. The Sanad was issued with the seals of the viceroy on February 10 1718, two months later.

On April 12, 1718 Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan gave to Shahu a Sanad for the "Lands of the old Kingdom" that is Swarajya. In this way Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan gave to Shahu Sanads for Sardeshmukhi and Swarajya. But it remained to be ratified at Delhi by the Emperor.

The Emperor was already involved in the struggle with his minister; so he refused to ratify the agreement made by the viceroy with the Maratha. Sayyid Hussain Ali quickly grasped the situation and arranged the expedition with the help of the Maratha. A news of Hussain Ali reached at Delhi made the Emperor helpless. Farrukh-siyar the Emperor was deposed and a prince named Rafi-ud-darjot was placed on the throne. His regime was for a few months. During this time the royal 'Farmans' conferring the grants were issued to Raja Shahu. The Farman for chauth was issued on 3 March and that for Sardeshmukhi on 15 March 1719.[80] Swarajya is a term applied to those territories of central Maharashtra. It is particularly extended from the river Tapi in the north to the Krishna in the South. Sardeshmukhi was a part of revenue that is, 1/10 sanctioned by the

Emperor, Chauth 1/4 of the amount which was collected by leaders and chieftains from their annual income.

The conditions under which Shahu accepted the grants are given below. Shahu stated:

> *I am making an agreement to be obedient to Your Majesty, according to the sequel will act.*
>
> *1st I have obtained from your bounty, and generosity the Watan of Sardeshmukhi of the six provinces of the Deccan, with the favour of the Almighty, I will make your country extremely populous, and the Peshkush according to the dustoor and agreeing with the dustoor of other Jamindars shall be paid after receiving the Sanad agreeable to the agreement.*
>
> *2nd I have obtained the fourth part of the six Subhas of the Deccan in return for which fifteen thousand horsemen shall be ready in the six provinces and whatever your collectors may order that shall be performed.*
>
> *3rd No plunder shall be committed in the forts, the stations and the country of Your Majesty, and whoever wishes shall pass through the six provinces with safety.*
>
> *4th The dependents of Your Majesty having become your enemies whether Marathas or Mussulmans, shall find no admission in my Kingdom,*

should they ask for it.

5th A man of high rank shall be placed by me with your collector that according as I have made an agreement so shall be act.[81]

Thus, the Farman was issued by the Emperor Rafi-ud-Rajat to Peshwa on behalf of Raja Shahu. Balaji's Statecraft raises Shahu's prestige and established his position as lawful ruler of the Marathas. It was legal status which Shahu had been trying to acquire. This Sanad enabled the Marathas to become masters of their home and obtained facilities for expansion. This was very profitable subsidiary alliance made by Marathas, by which Marathas secured the rights of sovereignty and viceroy depended on Marathas' help. Shahu had instructed Balaji and others to try to obtain similar Sanads for Subha of Malwa and Gujarat.[82] The Marathas stayed at Delhi for a month and Shahu offered a grand welcome to the Peshwa and his party. He felt highly gratified of the success of the expedition.[83] Balaji reached Satara on 4 July 1719 with Shahu's mother Yesubai and followers. Raja Shahu enjoyed meeting his mother after twelve years. He properly complimented the Peshwa on this remarkable achievement. A grand Darbar was held at Satara, when Balaji presented his colleagues and co-workers to Shahu. Sambhaji of Kolhapur had sent his

gratitude to Shahu for the expedition. With the achievement of the Sanad a new era of hope and aspiration began for Marathas. It gave a new turn and fresh vision to Maratha ambition. A few days after the return from Delhi Balaji Vishwanath died on 2 April 1720.

Balaji had found the country unsettled and weak with civil war, but he left it strong peaceful and prosperous for Shahu. Certain new practices also crept in during Balaji's ascendancy and that is feudalism. Feudalism was spread by Balaji's revenue system. Shahu and Balaji obtained fresh grants from the Emperor and new revenue system was introduced.

When Shahu ascended as Chhatrapati, Maratha people as a whole and soldiers were by no means less independent than they had been during the days of Sambhaji and Rajaram. In these the two of them conducted wars directly against the Emperor unconsciously and a situation came to be developed in course of time, when Maratha leaders established their sway. Shahu allowed them liberty to spread out and he stationed various Maratha Sardars all over Maharashtra.[84] If he had to oppose openly, he could have failed in his attempt. He, therefore, followed the path of conciliation and goodwill, that secured him status. They could not at once institute a perfect new system of their own. They hads to modify suitably and re-build the system already in existence.

For the rapid expansion of Maratha power no other arrangement could have worked in that age. Shahu knew his own limitations. The salutary principle of Shivaji was abandoned by Shahu and his Peshwa on account of various considerations. Shahu himself owed his position to the help of these Jagirdars due to which the Maratha Raj attained stability. But there is no doubt that the system carried with it the seeds of feudalism.s The Jahagirdar offered all kinds of excuses when called upon to render service. They did not often maintain the stipulated quota of troops. Their accounts were never perfect. The main problem of this system of Jahagirdars was the incompetence of the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa to exact obedience. The hereditary appointments to public office did away with the practice of counting merit and the Jahagirdars became independent. Shahu and his first three Peshwas succeeded in keeping the Jahagirdars under proper control and check.

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2 Bhave, V.L. Rumal I.L.I., p. 109.

3 Sardesai, G.S. - N.H.M., Vol. I, p. 362.

4 Bhave, Y.L. Ruman I.L.T. p. 112.

5 Ibid.

6 Barway, M.W. Op.cit., p. 41.

7 Chitnis, M.R., Op.cit., p. 24.

8 Bhave, Y.L., Rumal I.L.I. p. 111. G.S. Sardesai - Marathi Riyasat Vol. II, p. 286. Ambikabai died in captivity.

9 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. (Ed.II) Vol. II, p. 286. Barway, M.W. - Op.cit., p. 43. Virubai was Shahu's illegitimate wife.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Sardesai, G.S. - M.T. (Ed.II) Vol. II, p. 285.

13 Sardesai, G.S. - N.H.M. Vol. I, p. 365.

14 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. Vol. II, p. 287.

15 Sardesai, G.S. - N.H.M. Vol. I, p. 365.

16 He was illegitimate son of Shahaji Raje Bhosale.

17 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. Ed. II, Vol. II, p. 305.

18 Ibid.

19 Sardesai, G.S. - N.H.M., Vol. I, p. 366.

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21 Grand Duff - History of the Marathas, Vol. I, p. 459.

22 Pagdi, S.M. - Marathyanche Swatantrya Yuddha, p. 101.
Also Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. Vol. II, p. 318.

23 Ibid.

24 Kinkaid and Parasnis - History of Maratha People, p. 188.

25 Chitnis, M.R. - M.Y.C., p.89 (Ed. 1924).

26 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R., Ed. II, Vol. II., p. 320.
Pagdi, S.M. - Mongal Va Marathe, p. 191.
Bhimsen Saxena writes - Shahu fled from Mughal camp with his followers.

27 Ranade, M.G. - Rise of the Maratha Power, p. 200.

28 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. (Ed.II) Vol., III, p. 36.

29 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. Ed. II, Vol. III, p. 38.

30 Gupte, K.R. - Nagpurkar Bhosalyanchi Bakhar, p. 20.

31 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. Vol. II, Ed. II, p. 320.

32 Garge, S.M. - Karweer Riyasat, p. 93.

33 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. Ed. II, Vol. III, p. 46.

34 Ibid. Rajwade Vol. XV, No. 360.

35 Sardesai, G.S. - N.H.M. Vol. II, p. 22.
Also - Bhave, Rumal I, Lekhank I, p. 114.

36 Rajawade - Vol. XV, Document No. 288.

37 It was customary of the Maharaja of Satara to sound drums on Saturday in honour of the event.

38 The date of coronation has been settled by G.S. Sardesai - Marathi Riyasat.

39 Sardesai, G.S. - Op.cit., Vol. III, p. 50.

40 Bhave, Y.L. Rumal I, Lekhank I, p. 112.

41 Garge, S.M. - Karweer Riyasat, Ed. II, p. 120.
Rajwade, Vol. XX, 282.

42 Rajwade - Vol. III, Document No. 62.

43 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. Ed. II, Vol. II, p. 15.

44 Ibid.

45 Grand Duff - History of the Marathas (Ed. J.P. Guha), Vol. I, p. 235.
Sardesai, G.S. - Op.cit., Vol. III, p. 20.
Dhanaji Jadhav died in the middle of the year 1708 and his son Chandrasen succeeded to the office of the Senapati.

46 Rajwade - Op.cit., Vol. III, Document No. 55.57.

47 Ibid., Karweer Riyasat, Ed. I, p. 77.

48 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. Ed. II, Vol. III, p. 29.

49 Garge, S.M. - Karweer Riyasat, p. 88.

50 Ibid., p. 95.

51 Tarabai's son Shivaji proclaimed as Chhatrapati in 1700 and died in 1726.
Garge, S.M. - Karweer Riyasat, p. 96.

52 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. (Ed. III) Vol. III, p. 64.
When exactly he was made the Senakarte is not definitely known, but it was not later than 1708.

53 Grand Duff says Chandrasen was directed to levy the Chauth, Sardeshmukhi etc. from Mughal districts, p. 238.

54 Chitanis, M.R. - T.S.M.Y.C. p. 29.

55 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R. (Ed.II) Vol. III, p. 70.

56 Sinha, S.N. - Rise of the Peshwa (Ed. 1954), p. 53.

57 Garge, S.M. - Op.cit., p. 143.

58 Malgaonkar, M. - Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur, p.89.

59 Garge, S.M. - Op.cit. (Ed. II), p. 149.

60 Rajwade - Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 10.

61 Sardesai, G.S. - Op.cit., Vol. III (Ed. II).

62 Ibid., p. 78.

63 Malgaonkar, M. Op.cit., p. 103.

64 Parashuram Pant was released afterwards on Balaji's recommendation.

65 Chitanis, M.R. - T.S.M.Y. Charitra, p. 45.

66 Sardesai, G.S. - N.H.M. (Ed. II) Vol. II, p. 31.

67 Sardesai, G.S. - Marathi Riyasat (Ed.III) Vol.III, p. 100.

A recent find mentions that Balaji's father Visaji and grand father Parashuram were in Shivaji's employ as military captain.

History Congress, p. 72.

68 Ibid.

69 Sardesai, G.S. - N.H.M. (Ed.II), Vol. II, p. 32.

70 Wad, G.C. - Treaties and Agreements, re-read. Mawji and Parasnis (1914), p. 197.

71 Ibid.

72 Wad, G.C. Op.cit.

73 IHRC - Vol. XVII, p. 204.

74 He had in 1699 accompanied Chhatrapati Rajaram to Jinji and on some irritation had retired at Banaras.

Sardesai, G.S. - N.H.M. (Ed. II), Vol. II, p. 45.

75 S.P.D. Vol. VII, pp. 28-29.

76 P.D. 30: 222.

77 Persian Seal of Shahu which is used for Imperial offices.

Chitanis, M.R. - T.S.M.Y. p. 56.

78 I.H.R.C. - Vol. XVII, p. 205.

79 Sardesai, G.S. - Op.cit., Ed. II, Vol. III, p. 53.

80 Grand Duff - Op.cit., p. 372.

81 IHRC Vol. XVII, p. 210.

82 Sardesai, G.S. M.R. (Ed.II) Vol. III, p. 150.

83 Gujar, M.V. Op.cit., Vol. 1, p. 7.

84 Sardesai, G.S. - Op.cit., Ed. II, Vol. II, p. 62.

CHAPTER THREE

SHAHU'S EMPIRE IN ZENITH

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After the sudden death of first Peshwa - Balaji Vishvanath - Shahu appointed Balaji's son Bajirao as Peshwa at Masur, 30 miles east of Satara on 17 April 1720.[1] Shahu held a special Darbar and asked the assemblage to give cordial support to him. Many Maratha Sardars and veterans of Shahu's Court possessing experience and merit were not prepared to support this. But Shahu assured them that if Balajirao proved himself unworthy in his future plans and actions he would himself remove him and make fresh appointment. The general opinion considered him to be a raw inexperienced and impetuous youth.

In a great Darbar specially convened at Masur Chhatrapati Shahu invested Bajirao with the insignia of the Peshwa's office. The Chhatrapati delivered a speech for tendering advice to the Peshwa. He particularly referred to the services rendered by Balaji Vishvanath.

Balaji was given all his father's Jahagirs. The Jahagirs of Damaji Thorat were also bestowed on him.[2] Bajirao had implicit confidence in his master. He raised the necessary troops and strengthened the royal authority by eliminating opposition. Ambaji Pant Purandare was appointed the Mutalik to assist Shahu

whenever the Peshwa was not in capital. Peshwa's strong supporter, Sant Brahmendra Swami greatly revered Shahu. Fatehsingh Bhosale [3] the favourite of Shahu readily agreed to give his support to the Peshwa. At the very time the new change took place in Delhi politics and Nizam-ul-Mulk was appointed as Viceroy of Deccan and the conflict started between Marathas and Nizam-ul-Mulk.

Shahu and Nizam:

The Deccan had always a peculiar attraction for Nizam. When he was Viceroy during 1713-1715 he had mastered the technique of fighting in the Deccan. He resumed his friendship with Sambhaji, Chandrasen and other Maratha rebels. Bajirao, on receipt of the confirmation, proceeded to realise the chouth and to enforce other provisions of the treaty by force of arms. But besides following the path of war Nizam had established his personal contact with the young Peshwa. They had met on 13 to 19 February 1723 at Bhelsa. Raja Shahu thought that the meeting between the Peshwa and Nizam would strengthen the relations. Shahu thought that meeting between the two will find a solsution to the problem of collecting Chauthai from the Deccan but in the meeting nothing tangible came out.

In the meantime Nizam had assumed his authority

in Malwa and Gujarath and went back to Delhi. He appointed Mubarizkhan as his deputy in Deccan. But Mubarizkhan declared his authority in the Deccan. When Nizam knew this he called the Peshwa to meet him near Dhar at Nalcha on 18 May 1724[4]. Both professed friendship with each other. Beside recognizing the imperial grants Nizam agreed to subsidize Bajirao's army[5] In this crisis Bajirao did not keep his master fully informed about his dealings.

Raja Shahu became greatly worried on account of the activities of his youthful Peshwa and feared that Bajirao might land the Maratha Kingdom in difficulty. Shahu was further annoyed over the long absence of the Peshwa from the capital and because of his defying attitudes. In a letter of remonstrance Shahu wrote to Bajirao in 1722, that -

> *Your letter of request has reached us. You have written about your loyalty (towards the Swami). As such, in order to discuss some important matters with you personally, I had ordered you to see me, and several letters were despatched accordingly, but as yet, you have not shown your inclination to see me. What impression should I form about this behaviour on your part? I had written to you several times that you should mend your ways to indicate your loyalty, and I had ordered you to meet me without delay, but you have ignored the summons and*

caused great delay. This matter must receive your careful attention. There is nothing surprising that you are undertaking important talks. But the attitude of hesitation to meet me is not going to be useful. Secondly, you were asked to post some good person to remain in the presence of the Swami to keep both parties well informed but you have not paid any attention to it. As a result many matters concerning the state administration have been kept pending. You must have realised this that you have yourself put queries and counter-queries about them but you seem to have forgotten all about it. But your Swami has never shown any remissness to sbring these intriguing matters to your notice, in order to awaken you. I had never delayed assuming that you would do it today or tomorrow. But you have never realised it. With all this, even the matter concerning the Nawab, has been kept pending. So, it is for this reasons that the matter has been brought to your notice. However, it is for you to show earnestness and watchfulness in looking after the responsibility of administration and defence of the state and to what extent I should always write about this to you in my letters. I have, therefore, to ask you to come to me onces, in order to understand the matters and implement them accordingly. I am greatly surprised to find that [illegible] if you have enough leisure to spend in l[illegible]ness, you have ignored to pay a visit to me. Unless you come personally to my presence the Swami will not take anything in his consideration.

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In future, if you are determined to indicate your inability in the matter, the Swami will have to reconsider the matter afresh. Let it be known to you.[6]

This letter of Shahu throws light on the deep annoyance of the Raja over the defying attitude of his Peshwa. It appears from the letter that Bajirao was showing remissness toward his sensitive master. Shahu had even gone to the extent of remembering to Bajirao the faithful behaviour of his father (Balaji Vishwanath). Shahu threatens that if Bajirao would not obey him and discuss certain urgent matters personally with him at Satara, the continuation of Bajirao on the Peshwaship would be reconsidered.

In letter No. 28 of SPD-17, Shahu expressed his annoyance that even after sending five to ten orders of summons to Bajirao, he did not care to visit his master. In this letter, Shahu had again ordered Bajirao to come to see him immediately. The same harsh tone of Shahu is expressed in his orders issued to Bajirao, the Pratinidhi, Sarlashkar and Trimbakrao Dabhade. in the year 1725-26. They were taken to task for not reporting their movements to the Raja. They were directed to write in detail as to how far they had proceeded and what plans they had prepared for the future.[7] The above letters show that Bajirao was taking too much liberty with his master Raja Shahu and did not care to keep

him fully informed about his own plans and activities. His long absence from the capital and remissness in replying to the summons froms the Raja, created grave doubts in the mind of Shahu, regarding the plans of the young Peshwa.

Nizam received substantial help from Shahu in the battle of Sakherkhed against Mabarizkhan and won the battle. After the battle of Sakherkhed Raja Shahu had been inclined to regard Nizam as his friend. Raja Shahu's predilection towards the Mughals always stood in his way of judging the motive of the Nizam, who had kept up studiously a show of goodwill towards him. But now he could never believe that the Nizam was the vindictive of all his enemies in the South. Bajirao had no doubt about his dark designs. Therefore, when Shahu planned the invasion of the Karnatic he did not show any great enthusiasm for it. He did not believe the friendly profession of the Nizam. He thought, he would put pressure on him from the south by annexing the Karnatic. Shahu was always nervous about Bajirao. But a man of affectionate nature, Shahu was indeed innocent of the intricate problems of diplomacy. He did not know that by invading the Karnatic he would give unparadonable offence to the Nizam.

The Nizam was studiously cautious in carrying out his designs against Shahu. Firstly he removed his

capital from Aurangabad to Hyderabad. It was to be nearer to Karnatic and further away from Satara.[8] Secondly, he proposed to deceive Pratinidhi when Bajirao was absent on the Karnatak expedition. He successfully negotiated with the Pratinidhi for the exemption of the province of Hyderabad from Chough and Sardeshmukhi. He had allowed them in exchange of their claim over the Mahals held by him in personal Jagir in Balaghat.[9] Pratinidhi joined Nizam against Peshwa. Trimbakrao joined Nizam because of his interest in Gujarat. Thus, the Pratinidhi, Sambhaji, Chandrasen, and Trimbakrao had made a common cause against Shahu and fallen in the conspiracy of the Nizam.

Shahu had so far shown willingness to live in amity with his neighbour. Towards his cousin he had never expressed illwill though he had power and resources sufficient enough to defeat him. He had believed in friendly professions of the Nizam. So, Shahu was in the dark about the formidable combination which formed against him. If, however, Shahu had been deceived, his Peshwa who had correctly gauged the depth of Nizam, was not. The Karnatak campaign gave mortal offence to the Nizam and with his help Sambhaji demanded half of the Swarajya.[10] He told Shahu that until their respective claims were definitely settled, it would be unfair on his part to pay the tribute to Shahu and his officers.

The Nizam chose an opportunity when Peshwa and Senapati had departed for Karnatak. Shahu was dumbfounded, his ablest generals were far away in the south and Nizam had encamped in Poona. Shahu's position became shaky and he was not relieved of his anxiety till Bajirao's arrival in April, 1727.

In the meantime Shahu had been advised by his Pratinidhi to open negotiations for acceptance of cash payment for the Chauthai and Sardeshmukhi and the withdrawal of his tax-collector from all over the Mughal territory.[11] Shahu wished to march in person against his rival.[12] But this was thought to be improper. On the arrival of the Peshwa, he urged Chhatrapati not to proceed in person against Nizam. Because that would be lowering the status of the king of the Marathas. This view of Bajirao was approved by the Chhatrapati and the latter gave the entire management of the campaign against the Nizam to Bajirao. He promised Peshwa every help in the expedition. Shahu had all along suggested a policy of aggression towards Nizam. Bajirao left Satara on 13 October 1727 and war was formally declared against Nizam. Bajirao had left Poona and marched plundering and burning without mercy the Nizam's towns in all directions. Then he struck in the direction of Gujarat towards the Nizam's Jagir in Surat to draw his army to a hilly country. The Peshwa, by clever

strategy, brought the Nizam into difficult situation from which he was unable to extricate himself. On 25 February 1728 near Palkhed Nizam was completely defeated by the Marathas.[13] Nizam accepted the treaty of Mungi-Sheogaon on 6 March 1728 on the terms dictated by Bajirao. With this treaty Nizam agreed not to oppose Shahu's claim of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the six Subhas of the Deccan and offer no protection to Sambhaji.[14]

After the battle, the Nizam had to recognize Shahu as the sole King of Maharashtra. The Peshwa won for himself a place of confidence in Raja's counsels, which nothing could shake.[15] The Kolhapur prince having lost the support of Nizam, could no longer resist the superior claims of Shahu. It humbled the Pratinidhi and his party and the Maratha state was saved from the evils of an intermitable civil war. Shahu, therefore, decided to reduce his pretention once for all. After the defeat of the Nizam, Bajirao turned his attention to expansion of the Maratha power in the north. Under the king's authority Bajirao established his control on Malwa, Gujarat, Bundelkhand and Konkan. But despite suspicion of his movement Nizam conveyed to Raja Shahu and the Peshwa assurances of his fraternity towards them. His earnest desire to pay homage in person to his liege-lord and wash away the infamy.[16] The latter proposed personal meeting in order to put a stop to the

frequent clashes between them. But the Peshwa's reporters have uttered warning about Nizam's unfriendly attitude several times before.[17] Bajirao was not personally desirous to meet Nizam. He repeated his desire to Shahu, though Shahu suggested Bajirao to go and visit the Nizam at once. At last Bajirao accompanied by a few selected friends boldly advanced into the Nizam's dominions. The chiefs met on 27 December 1732 at a place called Rohe Rameshwar on the upper Manjira. The visit proved quite cordial. The Nizam presented Bajirao 7 dresses, 2 beautiful pairs of costly pearls, two horses and an elephant.[18] They agreed to give each other a free hand, the Nizam should be at liberty to gratify his ambitions in the south and the Peshwa in the north. The successful termination of the visit sent a thrill of joy throughout Maharashtra.

But the Peshwa's sudden dash on Delhi created adverse circumstances in Delhi and the Emperor immediately called Nizam. Nizam thought it to be the only means of crushing the Marathas and his hated rival Bajirao. Peshwa, however, so effectually called on his brother to attack Nizam's territory and keep him engaged in the south.[19] He himself crossed Narmada in 1736 and advanced gradually towards the Nizam at the south. Shahu was appealed to persuade Fatehsingh Bhosale, Sarlashkar, Raghuji Bhosale and a host of the other

Maratha chiefs to march into Khandesh.[20] At last the Nizam abandoning his equipment in Bhopal, began retreating under the cover of a powerful artillery. Nizam soon found his position intolerable and begged Bajirao for terms of peace. On 26 Ramjan (7 January, 1738) at Darai Sarai he signed the convention. He agreed Maratha authority over Malwa, Bundelkhand and the territory between the Narmada and Jamuna and to obtain confirmation from the Emperor. The victory of Bhopal marks the zenith of the Maratha power. Marathas expanded their authority throughout the North India and strengthened the position of Maratha Chhatrapati, that is, Shahu. By defeating the Nizam Peshwa gained a place in the Raja's confidence which nothing could shake.[21]

Shahu and Senapati Dabhade:

The founder of Dabhade family Yesaji Dabhade was the Patil of Talegaon. His son Khandoji accompanied Rajaram to Jinji. Rajaram honoured his faithful servant with the command of a Paga and the dignity of Sena-Khaskhel. In 1707 he joined Shahu's cause on the advice of Dhanaji Jadhav.[22] His services in Baglan, however, secured him the confidence of Raja. Shahu had appointed him Commander-in-Chief, the highest post in 1717.[23] From the beginning of the century Dabhade's arms had penetrated into Gujarat by successive incursions. The Senapati

in that region was acknowledged. Baglan and Gujarat were recognised as the special sphere of Dabhade. His able son Trimbakrao Dabhade was an important figure in Gujarat politics and became Senapati soon after his father's death on 8 January 1730.[24]

Dabhade belonged to the party opposed to the Peshwa at the court. They had been jealous of the personal ascendancy of the Peshwa. Their jealousy was converted into open enmity by Bajirao's importance in Gujarat. When Bajirao undertook northern expedition, he had his eye over the Chough and Sardeshmukhi of the province of Gujarat. Mughal Subhedar Sarbuland Khan was trying to resist the Maratha claim and was pressing Delhi court to help him. After the victory over Nizam the Peshwa sent his Vakil to Sarbuland Khan to settle the terms of the treaty.[25] On 23 March 1730, Sarbuland Khan of Gujarat agreed to the cession of Chough and Sardeshmukhi of Gujarat excepting the town of Surat and five per cent on the total revenue of Ahmedabad. In lieu of this Peshwa agreed to protect the country from dacoits and refractory Zamindars. The agreement concluded by Chimaji Appa was a bombshell to Senapati, Trimbakrao. The Peshwa was also anxious to undermine the authority of Trimbakrao in Gujarat and Khandesh and establish the king's sway over it. Trimbakrao,

who regarded Gujarat as his special sphere of influence, could not brook Peshwa's interference in his ancestral dominion. For that Shahu could not adjust their claim. Shahu had risen to authority not by the power of his sword, but by granting to his chiefs whatever they acquired by their prowess. Now Trimbakrao Dabhade Senapati became the centre of the revolt. Because the portions of Sardeshmukhi and Mokasa of the provinces of Gujarat were paid to Dabhade. Dabhade did not like the Peshwa's interference in Gujarat. Peshwa's claim reduced the other war-lords to a subordinate position and was naturally resented by those whose interest it affected. The dissaffected elements like Pilaji Gaiakwad, Kantaji Kadam, Udaji Pawar, Kanhoji Bhosale etc. gathered together against the Peshwa.

That situation of mutual antagonism followed a clash of arms. Dabhade thought of asking Nizam for his support against the Peshwa.[26] Nizam was watching the whole game from close quarters - the Peshwa-Senapati dispsute. Meanwhile, Chimaji Appa returned to Poona, and proceeded to Umbraj to explain to the Raja the implication of the treaty. Dabhade challenged the Peshwa's claim of judging his acts and his authority over him. Peshwa tried to meet Dabhade before he joined Nizam. Bajirao was surprised to find that other Maratha chiefs also joined Dabhade.

Shahu, on his part began his usual method of conciliation. He sent his personal agent to Dabhade, to induce him to accept a reasonable compromise. But Trimbakrao lodged before Shahu a strong complaint against the Peshwa. The Raja restored to Senapati the collection of Chauth of Gujarath on 15 December 1730.[27] This decision was not acceptable to the Peshwa. Because he did not approve of the King's policy of allotting the entire provinces to different Sirdars for the collection of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi.

Shahu had tried to control Bajirao effectively. But he began open preparation for arms conflict. Bajirao and Chimaji saw the danger and prepared themselves to meet it boldly. He sent reply to Shahu: "Dabhade creates trouble for us. We are quite equal to stopping him from doing mischief. But if he goes over and joins Nizam, Your Highness need not hesitate to deprive him of his office of the Senapati".[28] Shahu despatched his own trusted agents Amanaji Trimbak, Naro Ram, and Naro Gadadhar, to meet Trimbakrao and Umabai and bring them to reason for peaceful accommodation.[29] But in that meetisng seeing no disposition to come to terms, Senapati declared to Shahu: "We shall not give up an inch of land we own and will render only such service as we can". In reply to this Shahu sent him strong remonstrance - "You have been a loyal Hindu servant of the

State and serve the state instead of the enemy so that the nation may be proud of your conduct. You must work to extend the Maratha Raj. You have to subdue the nation's enemies and not join them".[30]

Thus, Dabhade created a serious threat to Shahu's position by opposing Peshwa. Shahu ordered Bajirao to proceed to Gujarat and bring Dabhade to his presence at Satara. This was the mission which Shahu entrusted solemnly to Bajirao when all means failed. Bajirao left Poona in 1730. When they proceeded, Dabhade had full consultation with Nizam-ul-Mulk and plan was arranged against the Peshwa. Dabhade and Dadoji Pawar, who had quarrelled with Bajirao, should unite their forces and march against Bajirao. But all the plans were shattered by the masterly strategy of Bajirao, who swooped down upon the combined army of Dabhade and Pawar before they united. Bajirao gained victory against Dabhade in April 1731 and Dabhade was killed in the battlefield at Dabhai.[31]

Bajirao was anxious to report Shahu, the details of his encounter, before others could poison his master's mind against him. He sent an account of it to his royal master. Shahu's reply showed how deeply he felt about the quarrels of his high commanders:

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He intrigued no doubt with the Nizam. In his wickedness he fought against us, and he has tested the fruits thereof. But the lives of my officers have been uselessly wasted. Both sides must now make peace with each other and desist from strife.[32]

The news of the death of Trimbakrao shcoked Shahu. The Senapati's mother Umabai attributed it to the Peshwa's treachery and reported to Shahu against the Peshwa. Shahu himself immediately hastened to Talegaon to meet the lady and brought her with Bajirao. He made both Bajirao and Chimaji Appa fall at Umabai's feet and asked for forgivance.[33] He asked Bajirao prostrate himself before the lady. He had given sword and requested her to sever her head if that would satisfy her feeling to revange.[34] The lady was mollified when Peshwa humbly begged her pardon and offered all possible compensation for the loss.

Shahu conferred the Senapati's office to the younger brother Yashavantrao.[35] Umabai became his guardian and Pilaji the deputy. But Dábhade proved utterly incompetent. So that the Dabhade sank into non-entity, notwithstanding every effort on the part of Shahu. Shahu passed orders that half the revenue of each province should be paid direct to the royal treasury by the Peshwa. The other half of the Gujarath and Malwa should be

allotted to military expenses of Dabhade and Bajirao respectively.[36] Shahu made this compromise but no permanent reconciliation came out between them that could save the Maratha Raj against internal complications. In this Shahu had indirectly accepted the superiority of the Peshwa over others. Dabhade's death made the Peshwa sufficiently strong and enabled him to control the Maratha sovereignty in a greater way.

The conflict between Peshwa and Dabhade has become a matter of controversy. Some think that the Senapati was a rebel and criminal, he met the fate of a traitor. Others think that the Peshwa was an aggressor and drove the helpless Senapati into the arms of the arch enemy of the Marathas, namely, the Nizam. But it is clear that Dabhade's enmity was mainly directed against the assumption of the superior authority of the Peshwa. Peshwa represented him the obstacle that stood between him and complete independence. But Dabhade wanted to take the advantage of the internal dissension among the Maratha leaders and to evade payment of Chauth. Shahu from his side also made attempts to appease Senapati by sending him special envoys. Dabhade's revolt was directed mainly against the Peshwa and not against the Raja. If Raja looked on him as a rebel, he would not have expressed the sorrow after his death and conciliated his family. There is no ground to believe that

Raja had ordered the execution of the Senapati. And the Peshwa merely carried out the punishment. However, it was also certain that the consequences of the defeat of the Peshwa would have been disastrous to the Maratha cause.

Thus Raja Shahu in pursuance of his excellent policy of conciliation, avoided the chances of further friction between the Peshwa and the Senapati Dabhade. Afterwards Yashawantrao Dabhade, in spite of his title of commander-in-chief, was unwilling to serve with his father's murderer. Yeshawantrao Dabhade Senapati had no heart for fighting, and showed no anxiety to lead armies. He gradually faded into insignificance.[37] The Gaiakwad's services were recognised by the Raja who conferred on him the title of Sena Khaskhel. The conquest of Gujarat by the Marathas was thus mainly the work of two families.

Shahu and Sambhaji of Kolhapur:

After the coronation of Shahu, Sambhaji assumed power with the help of Ramchandra Pant and Balaji Vishwanath in 1714 at Kolhapur. The dual monarchy in Chhatrapati's house has been the source of perennial evil affecting the unity of the Maratha state. Sambhaji established his seat at Kolhapur. He did not entertain more conciliatory policy towards Shahu. He disturbed

Shahu's peace by playing into the hands of Shahu's enemy.

In 1718 Balaji Vishvanath, a powerful Peshwa, was away on his Delhi expedition for Sanad. Sambhaji of Kolhapur seized the opportunity and created trouble against Shahu. But Shahu lost no time in leading troops against Sambhaji. Immediately after return from Delhi Shahu and Balaji together carried their arms against Sambhaji during the closing months of 1719 and besieged his capital Kolhapur. But Shahu did not think of destroying his power permanently.

The jealousy between Sambhaji and Shahu was created by Chandrasen Jadhav and Sambhaji demanded half of the Swarajya from Shahu.[38] With that intention he made compromise with Nizam against Shahu. The Nizam promised his help to Sambhaji for his demand. Nizam told to Shahu that until his respective claims were definitely settled, it would be unfair on his part to pay the tribute to Shahu and his officers.

Shahu did his best all along to conciliate his royal cousin. Shahu addressed the following letter to him -

> *If you wanted to have separate kingdom of your own, you could have communicated your desire to us. Your revered father the late Rajaram obtained the kingdom through great*

personal effect. You must be aware what a keen interest he took in our welfare. We will ourselves grant you whatever you need most willingly. But to claim a share in a kingdom has no religious sanction. You should at once quit the Mughals and come back to us.[39]

It seems that the letter did not make any effect on Sambhaji and he joined Nizam, who with the help of Sambhaji entered the Poona districts.[40] At Poona Nizam declared Sambhaji as Chhatrapati of Marathas in 1727. But in 1728 Nizam was defeated at Palkhed and Sambhaji became helpless.

After this Udaji Chavan encouraged Sambhaji for contest against Shahu. He was the chief of Athani and rose to power with Ramchandrapant Amatya's favour.

On one of these days Shahu had gone for hunting. And when he came to know that Udaji was carrying depredations into the country, he called him to interview promising safe return. He came and had the remonstrances of the King against his conduct, but said little in reply. He was allowed to return safely as promised, but Shahu had soon to learn a good lesson for proving true to his words. After a few days assassins entered Shahu's tent for his assassination. But so dignified was the King that they lost their heart and instead of laying hands on him, confessed their guilt and

begged for his mercy. The King graciously pardoned them.[41] But Shahu resolved to put an end to the audacity and indivious attitude of the Chavan. Due to that Udaji Chavan joined Sambhaji and encouraged him. Sambhaji wrote a letter to his officers to join him with their armed forces against Shahu.[42]

Udaji Chavan, at the instigation of Sambjaji, plundered Shahu's territories. Shahu himself undertook a campaign against him. Pratinidhi joined Shahu and defeated Udaji near Varana. Sambhaji and Udaji were separately routed and the whole staff of household were captured by Pratinidhi[43] and brought before Shahu. Shahu paid due respect to them all and after conversing with them suitably allowed them to go back to Sambhaji at Panhala in 1729.

After this defeat Sambhaji found that his position had become hopeless. Tarabai was already under Sambhaji's confinement and chose to live with Shahu at Satara with manager Yado Gopal who was appointed to look after her comfort.[44] Because, the old queen was only too glad to escape from her co-wife's clutches. She observed that it was her lot everywhere to live in confinement. It was, therefore, useless to move her from one prison to another. Shahu readily consented to keep her with him in Satara fort prepared for her reception. There she lived until Shahu's death. Bhagwantrao Amatya also

wrote to Shahu: "... as a court of Kolhapur has become a refuge of mean and ill-mannered beings, I would feel grateful if Your Highness would allow me to serve at your fee". Udaji Chavan also deserted Sambhaji and accepted service under Shahu. Sambhaji was urged to make personal visit to Shahu. Sambhaji now had no alternative but to throw himself on his cousin's mercy. Shahu had always wanted to put an end to this dispute by a division. And Sambhaji, too, seemed to realise that it would be to his advantage to make peace with Shahu in the best possible terms. Both sides between them took another eight months to hammer out the terms of the treaty. At last, it was arranged that Shahu and Sambhaji should meet. The trend of these negotiations is reflected in the letter written by Sambhaji to Shahu in 1730. It goes thus:

> *The revered mother (Matoshri) has written expressing your affection and your desire that the feelings of amity between us should become stronger and result in a sensible solution. It is fitting that you should think so. It is also my desire. Matoshi had written that I should send a reply with Babaji Prabhu.*[45]

It is far more likely that the person referred to as 'Matoshri' in the letter was Yesubai who about this time resided in Satara. And it was she and not

Tarabai who brought pressure to bear upon both Shahu and Sambhaji to stop the conflict.[46] It is difficult to believe that Tarabai had any interest in the conflict that was going on between them.

There is another letter sent to Shahu by Sambhaji. This letter makes a specific reference to the proposed meeting between the two cousins:

> *I was gratified to be told that all my desires will be honoured after our meeting. The measure of your affection gave me great joy. I am the younger, it is only fitting that my desires should be gratified by you.*[47]

Shahu willingly forgave him and Tarabai lent her service in the negotiations for peace. He had practically agreed to everything that Sambhaji asked for and sent back the ambassador with dresses and presents alongwith a reply couched in very flattering terms. Sambhaji thus gave up his former high pretensions and agreed to accept what Shahu would willingly offer. There had been two previous attempts on Shahu's part to obtain a treaty, first from Prince Shivaji in 1708 and again from Sambhaji in 1726. In January 1731 Shahu sent from Satara Shripatrao, the Pratinidhi, Ambaji Purandare and other notable officers and nobles to escort Sambhaji into his dominions. Sambhaji escorted by his own picked troops and the Pratinidhi the escort

marched with him to Wathar in Satara district. Shahu on his part had already proceeded to Karad about 30 miles South-east of Satara. The meeting place of the two royal cousins was village Jakhinwadi.[48]

At Jakhinwadi a large Shamiyana (Pandal) splendidly decorated was pitched near the river. On an auspicious moment on the afternoon of Saturday, 27 February 1731 Shahu and Sambhaji came face to face. Amidst the music of bands and instruments Shahu and Sambhaji met each other. Sambhaji put his head on Shahu's feet, in token of submission. Shahu bent down and lifting up his cousin clasped him to his breast. Then they proceeded to the Darbar on open space close to Karhad on the bank of Krishna. A grand dinner was arranged in the evening and the host and the guest moved to Umbraj. At Umbraj the kind gave a series of magnificent entertainment. Then he insisted that Sambhaji should accompany him to the Holi festival at Satara. And the guest moved to Shahunagar for additional rejoicing.

Thus the civil war came to an end. When the treaty of Warana had been settled Shahu showered on his guest further gifts one of which was a sum of two hundred thousand rupees in cash. And King allowed him to depart. Fatehsing Bhosale was ordered to escort the prince back to Panhala. A treaty of peace consisting of nine articles ratified on 13 April 1731 as a treaty:

"(1) The province known as the Warana Mahal is given to you with all its forts and strong places.

(2) Half of all the states from the Tungabhadra South-west to Rameshwar are given to you and half is kept for ourselves.

(3) In exchange for Kopal you have given us Ratnagiri.

(4) The fort of Vadgaon must be destroyed.

(5) All your enemies shall be our enemies. Our enemies shall be your enemies. We shall both work in union for the welfare of the kingdom.

(6) From the junction of the Warana and Krishna rivers as far as the junction of the Tungabhadra and the Krishna the Southern banks with all its forts and strong places are yours.

(7) The Konkan from Salsi as far as Ankola is yours.

(8) You shall employ and pay no one in our territories.

(9) You must surrender the fort and district of Miraj and the forts and districts of Bijapur Athani and Talegaon."[49]

By this treaty Sambhaji was converted into an independent sovereign. He was now completely cut off from the north. He could only extend his dominions southward with condition that he was to hand over half his conquest to Shahu. By this treaty Sambhaji was relegated to a subordinate position and was made dependent on Shahu.

Thus, the two separate kingdoms, Satara and Kolhapur, formally came into existence. Within a year of Warana treaty Sambhaji seems to have begun to complain that he was not actually put into possession of all territory. And to this matter Sambhaji and Shahu again met at Satara on 20 November 1732.[50] Shahu was meticulous in the observance of the formalities. He sent Shripatrao Pratinidhi, Fattehsingh Bhosale and others to wait upon Sambhaji and to escort him to Satara. In this meeting what transpired is not clear, but Udaji Chavan's depredation must have formed the subject of the meeting. Sambhaji stayed in Satara for sometime and would address Fattehsingh Bhosale as 'Dada' (respective term for brother). He persuaded Tarabai to return with him to Panhala, but Tarabai did not go. In 1736 Sambhaji visited Jejuri with his wife Jijabai. By touring through Pratapgad and Mahabaleshwar he came to Satara. Shahu did not fail to accord a welcome to Sambhaji. Abaji Purandare, the Peshwa's representative at Shahu's court sent to

his master the following letter -

> *The master (Shahu) had specially camped at Pali to receive Sambhaji Raje. Here they met and came up to Satara. With him (Sambhaji) was his queen Jijabai and other womenfolk. They were given our (The Peshwa's) mansion for their residence. Rajarshi Swami (Shahu) has done full honours, elephants, horses, dress materials etc. valued at fifty thousand rupees, were presented. It was agreed to help Sambhaji to extend the rule in the Southern province.*[51]

Sambhaji was anxious to extend his rule into the south. He had requested Shahu to send a contingent to assist him. Shahu, on his part had agreed to send his Pratinidhi to join Sambhaji's expedition. But at this time Shahu could not have spared any sizable force for such venture. Because Peshwa Bajirao was making plans for another quick dash to Delhi. Sambhaji's biennial visits to Satara continued. These visits were amidst unflagging demonstrations of courtesy on Shahu's part. The relative position of the two courts had undergone a spectacular change. Shahu had achieved dizzy heights. His Peshwa was engaged in an ambitious campaign for the expansion of Maratha power. While an extensive empire was being earned out on behalf of Shahu. Sambhaji was served indifferently by his ministers and commanders.

The two cousins again met for the Diwali festival of 1738. The fanfare and monials was as before. Meanwhile Shahu solved the problem of Ranoji Ghorpade and Udaji Chavan. In this visit the content of the discussions was insignificant.[52] Shahu's plan for major conquest did not envisage Sambhaji's participation. Even Udaji Chavan was badly troubled by Shahu's force and Miraj, Tasgaon and Athani had been taken over by Shahu. Shahu and his cousin must have discussed family affairs at length and spent hours in soothing out the unending disputes among their chieftains.[53] In his stay Sambhaji knew Bajirao's plan to send a column into Goa within the next few months. At this time Sambhaji's frustration at the growing disparity between his position and Shahu had to contend with whole crop of new irritation. Sambhaji had complained again to Shahu.[54] "You yourself have always abided by these limitations. Why then should your commanders come to our districts and capture our post? It is by your commanders that your chief minister Bajirao has appropriated these posts or is it in disregard of your orders? How can the treaty between us be observed in future?"[55] Shahu's response to this complaint seems to have been couched in diplomatic platitudes. He blandly assures Sambhaji: "We have no designs over any of your districts and you should never entertain the least

doubts about this. We should meet ...". Shahu in his letter to Sambhaji tried to soften the whole issue. He seems to have shown much more concern and even spoken of transferring these newly acquired posts to Sambhaji's jurisdiction. With that intention Shahu and Sambhaji again met at Satara in 1740. After this Sambhaji arrived at Satara in 1741. Sambhaji was in Satara for ten months.[56] It was during this stay that Nanasaheb promised him that he would succeed to the united kingdom of Kolhapur and Satara after Shahu.

Raja Shahu and Kanhoji Bhosale:

Kanhoji Bhosale, the son of Parasoji Bhosale was appointed Sena-Saheb-Subha in 1710. His invasion of Malwa continued for five years. Then he invaded Gondwan and reduced the minor states to tributary states. But he had tried to join the Nizam and dissociated himself from the Maratha cause. So, he was constantly urged by the king to join the Peshwa in the Maratha struggle against Nizam.[57] Kanhoji was collecting money from Malwa and had deputed his nephew for the job. He had a few legitimate grievances against Chhatrapati Shahu. His first grievance was that his Malva affair went almost unrewarded and unrecognised by Shahu. He had also pointed out about royal interference in the Chandrapur affairs. He also feared the royal patronage

bestowed on his cousin which may adversely affect his own. Secondly King Shahu was educated in the imperial politics who would not tolerate the man, who does not use his first loyalty to his lord. Yet both these pulled on for nearly fifteen years with patience and tolerance towards each other.

But the victory of Palkhed completely changed the power structure of Satara. Now the king had a strong Peshwa at his elbow to support his power at home and abroad. Hence he decided to cut his obnoxious servant to size. Raja Shahu summoned Kanhoji to his capital and proposed a partition with his nephew.[58] In keeping with Maratha character Kanhoji was most unwilling to effect a partition of his patrimony with his cousin and nephew. The matter came to a head when Raja demanded Sikke Katyar (seal and dagger) to deposit back but Kanhoji refused it.[59]

Thus, when Kanhoji saw the clear sign of his dismissal he decided to flee. On 22 July 1728 Kanhoji pretended his visit to Rama Bhosale, his aunt at Kamathi but fled and encamped at Tasgaon. Kanhoji's ambitious designs were not secret. His flight was reported to the king within hours. Shahu personally persuaded the deserter. The next day Shahu undertook an open Maratha campaign against Kanhoji.[60] He also wrote to the Nizam reminding their earlier agreement, that if he needed to hire Kanhoji, the king is ready to recommend him.

But privately he declared his intention to break the peace with Nizam if the latter continued to hire the Maratha deserters.[61] Thus the king effected a perfect Isolation of Kanhoji.

Kanhoji Rebeled Against Raja:

Thus, Kanhoji fled from Satara, because he found that it was impossible to resist the royal wrath. He almost begged Nizam for a Jagir of Akola and Belapur and Dohi-Hande for a mansab of 10 thousand. When his intention leaked out, he was deserted by many of his lieutenants like Santaji Bhosale and Shivaji Jadhavrao, who found a ready shelter under the Peshwa's banner.[62] Shahu followed a moderate policy towards the deserter. He wished to accommodate Bhosale's brothers and decided to consult with Kanhoji and Savai Santaji before he invaded the kingdom of Devgad.[63] But Kanhoji and Santaji considered it less majestic to accomplany the Peshwa and quarrelled with his agents. Kanhoji even refused to visit Pilaji Jadhavrao but he asked Raja Shahu to grant him an audience. But this was for a ruse as he delivered a lethal blow on Awaji Kawade on 22 February 1728. A force of 4 thousand under Santaji Ghadave and Yesaji Mohite completely surprised Awaji Kawade at Bhandegaon Nadsi (Yavatmal). Meanwhile Shripatrao Pratinidhi and Fatehsingh Bhosale led an expeditory force

to Berar and invaded Devgad. The Marathas continued their aggression in Devgarh. Raja of Devgarh, to avoid quarrel with Kanhoji, appealed to the King who sent a restraining order.[64] And simultaneously he conceded Kanhoji's demands. Thus, Kanhoji received the Saranjams which were offered to him on the eve of the battle of Palkhed.[65] But the appeasement failed and Kanhoji continued his depredation. Even the royal territories were not spared. Daryapur, a paragana belonging to Shaikh Mira (a royal favourite and commandant of the fort of Satara) also suffered heavily. Ultimately Raja Shahu lost his patience and dismissed Kanhoji. He also transferred all territory under Kanhoji to Fatehsing Bhosale, King's god-son.[66] Shahu asked Kanhoji to leave Berar but he did not pay any heed. He used to say "Shahu is the ruler but I too am Raja in my territory, who is he that I should act according to his instructions?".[67] One unconfirmed Maratha memoir recalls that Kanhoji declared himself the king.[68] The news added fuel to fire and king deputed Raghuji and Ranoji to bring the rebel to book.[69] Kanhoji declared his loyalty to the king but secretly contacted Nizam.[70] Shahu perfectly understood the game and divided the territory of Kanhoji between Pratinidhi and Fatehsingh. In October 1730 Raghuji and Ranoji fought a still battle and defeated and pursued Kanhoji who fled at Mahur. Thus, when defeat and

humiliation started at face Kanhoji appealed to the king to pardon off. Shriniwas Pratinidhi and Narottam Mantri recommended him in the strongest terms. Raja Shahu who was never hard allowed Kanhoji to be represented.[71] He was pardoned off and given two Mokkasa as already promised as a pension. Afterwards Kanhoji stayed at Nagpur at the request of Raghuji, when the latter came victorious to Satara from his Karnatak expedition.[72] Raghuji Bhosale, the son of Kanhoji's cousin Mambaji had been appointed as Sena-Saheb-Subha. It is choice of Raja Shahu, and it is probable that Peshwa had no say in it.

Karnatak Expedition:

Shahu accepted a sanad from Delhi, by which the Karnatak was assigned to the Marathas, for the collection of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi. In assigning the Saranjam lands Shahu had given Akkalkot, on the border of Karnatak, to Fatehsingh Bhosale. Shahu had expressed his desire to annexe the Karnatak to the Swarajya according to the condition of the treaty in 1718. Fatehsingh Bhosale was appointed to the supreme command and was associated with Bajirao and other Maratha Sardars. He called Tulaji, chief of Tanjore.[73]

There were two expeditions undertaken - one in 1728 and another in 1729. In these two expeditions he passed through a long region to Shringpattan, levying

contribution on Belgaum, Bednore, and other districts on the way. After staying a month at Shrirangpattan, he returned to Satara via Shirol and Kapshi in 1729. Each time he engaged himself for six months and returned without gaining advantages as Shahu had anticipated.[74] For this failure Shahu demanded an explanation from Fatehsingh on his return to Satara as to why he did not remain in Karnatak until it was subdued. Fatehsingh could not give a satisfactory answer. Bajirao however, promptly replied that since they had not the order of the king they did not dare to stay. Shahu became pleased and dropped further enquiries. The campaign was not a success but it had created a number of enemies for Shahu and Bajirao. Afterwards Raja Pratapsingh threw himself upon Shahu's protection in 1740. Shahu despatched Raghuji and Fatehsingh Bhosale with large force. Raghuji invested Karnatak and Trichinopoly. Raghuji's brilliant success in Karnatak naturally gave him a high place in Raja's favour. But this incident made an inevitable clash between the Peshwa and Raghuji. Fatehsingh Bhosale stayed in Akkalkot.

Shahu Approved Bajirao's Policy:

In Shahu's court a great controversy arose on the question of the future policy of the Maratha State in Mughal empire. There were two groups, one led by

the Peshwa Bajirao and the other by the Pratinidhi Shripatrao. Bajirao stood out for the policy of territorial expansion at the expense of Mughal empire. An aggressive policy of war and conquest would also strengthen the Maratha State. So Bajirao on his sole initiative sent orders to the Maratha sardars to make raids into Malwa and Gujarat. These independent decisions of Bajirao, without reference to Shahu, were not pleasing to the king. This seemed highly outrageous to the party of Pratinidhi Shripatrao. Pratinidhi's party held that the time was not ripe for actual aggression which would come duly when they had a well ordered state and sound finances. The infant Maratha state was emerging from the exhaustion of the civil war and was not able to bear the strain of aggression. Shahu was a man of peaceful tendencies. He was also opposed to it because of his gratitude towards the Mughal emperor. It was difficult to convince Shahu for the aggression. Thus, reigning sovereign was in agreement with the Pratinidhi. The king and other ministers felt highly nervous at the bold attitude of young and inexperienced Peshwa. Shahu, therefore, wrote several letters to Bajirao inviting him for personal interview in this important matter. Bajirao paid at first scant attention to these invitations. But afterwards the letter hinting his disloyalty and threatening dismissal for his obdurate attitude, he

obeyed the order. Shahu's letter said -

> *You have written much about your loyalty, but we wrote to you several times to come to our presence, you do not seem to think of coming ... I felt that you should appoint some good men who could act in consonance with both parties (you and Pratinidhi) in our presence. But you failed to make aware in the matter. Therefore should come once, learn these things from us and act accordingly. We do not want to do anything unless you have personal interview with us for a few days. If we are convinced that you are unable to manage this we shall have to think of somebody else. Then you will feel for it.*[75]

Here Shahu insists on a personal discussion of Peshwa with him over his policy. After that letter Bajirao came to Satara and strongly urged the Chhatrapati for approving his policy of expansion in the north. Pratinidhi favoured the policy of peace towards their neighbour on the ground that Maratha kingdom had not recovered from the strains of civil war. Pratinidhi argued that there was a powerful and capable ruler like Nizam as neighbour, "it is best for us to accept the peaceful and conciliatory policy to strengthen the Maratha kingdom". He suggested to desist from aggression and to concentrate on internal organisation until the state had become wealthy and strong.[76] After that they

could conquer countries nearer home, retake Jinji and annexe Karnatak and then think of conquering Hindustan. As against the Pratinidhi's policy Bajirao explained his view about a policy of war and territorial expansion. He pointed osut that the best way to bring money into the empty treasury was to attack and plunder as was done by Shivaji the Great. He illustrated the glorious conquests of Shivaji to rouse enthusiasm or ambition in the king. He drew their attention to the present condition of India, to the weaknesses and imbecility of the Mughals on the one hand and the activities, energy and enterprise of the Marathas on the other. Now there is our time to drive stronger from the land of the Hindu and to acquire immortal renown. The Maratha flag in your region shall fly from the Krishna to the Attack. Bajirao further urged Shahu not to think of minor object and referring to the Mughals he said, "Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree, the branches must fall themselves".[77] The arguments were pregnant with political expediency. Shripatrao's reasons were sound but the policy that he outlined presented many difficulties. The Pratinidhi consistently opposed the Peshwa's growing ambition. But lacking his rival's military ability, his personal influence with the sovereign could avail him little. He was secretly negotiating for the acquisition of the fortress of Raigad in 1733.

He forestalled the Peshwa; roused his hatred and doomed the expedition to failure. In 1730 he was reported to be secretly aiding the Dabhade party in their revolt against the Peshwa.[78]

He had a feeling and mortified at the Peshwa's resounding success; so he rushed into fitting out expedition in the Karnatak but failed. The Pratinidhi had resolved on beseting his path with every conceivable obstacle. Taking the opportunity of Bajirao's absence in the Karnatak expedition, the wily Nizam made overtures over the Pratinidhi for a substantive alliance. He was ready to make annual payment of an equivalent sum of money to the Marathas, provided they never entered Hyderabad. Nizam promised to confer on Pratinidhi a Jagir in Berar and estate near Baramati-Indapur to Shahu.[79]

The daring and eloquence of the young Peshwa won the king's impression in spite of the elements of truth in Pratinidhi's arguments. Shahu was a shrewd judge of men and pressed the power of detached observation, followed the policy of Peshwa. Peshwa tried to convince Shahu and he lost no time in explaining the whole situation to the noble-hearted but guileless Chhatrapati. He had frankly been telling him that the crafty and cunning Nizam-ul-Mulk had bribed the Pratinidhi.

The Chhatrapati saw the whole situation and readily consented to support Bajirao in his patriotic plan in respect of the expansion of the Maratha power. Shahu agreed to the policy of war and conquest and gave a free hand to his Peshwa.[80] Shahu deserves the credit for rising to the occasion after seeing the force and magnitude of Bajirao's far-sightedness. He appreciated Peshwa's sound view and wise arguments and gave his wholehearted support to the heroic Peshwa. Afterwards Pratinidhi followed the path of cooperation in the internal administration.

Expansion of Maratha Power in the North:

Shahu accepted the Peshwa's policy of expansion of the Maratha power. A stroke of a deliberate policy, that in the apportioning of the spheres of influence following the imperial grant of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, Khandesh and Malwa, bordering on it were assigned to the Peshwa for making collection.[81] The invasions since 1720 were mostly carried on by the Peshwa in person and deserved to be closely watched and stoutly opposed. The appointments of regular Maratha officials like Keso Mahadeo, Keso Vishvanath, Udaji Pawar were made to levy Chauth from the south districts of Malwa. Sawai Jaysing also helped the Maratha cause and facilitated

Bajirao's task in Malwa. The emperor appointed Raja Giridhar to the government of Malwa in 1725 and he carried on a galliant struggle against the Marathas.

The regime of the new Governor began with friction with Maratha Kamavisdars. He turned them out and stopped their collection. They communicated to the Raja Shahu of the unexpected resistance they were meeting with from the Subhedar in levying Chauth, on which representations were addressed to him not to disturb the collection.[82] The representations fell on deaf ears and Daya Bahadur and his cousin moved about the province carrying on their activity against the Marathas. In 1728 Bajirao gathered a most formidable force consisting of prominent Maratha Sardars in Malwa. Chimaji Appa arrived in Malwa to assist Bajirao's agent already posted there.[83]

A bloody battle was fought at Sarajpur in 1728 in which the Bahadur was killed and his crops dispersed. The Maratha troops spread everywhere demanding their dues. Chimaji Appa moved towards Bundi, Kotab and then retiring into Gujarath. The campaign opened on 1728 and came to and end in May 1729. Besides that major battle, a number of minor engagements had been fought.

Daya Bahadur wanted to remove the stumbling block of Nandlal Mandloi of Indore who had remained friendly to the Marathas. Daya Bahadur wanted to win

him over by successive threats, but nothing proved useful. The Maratha's cause continued to prosper; while they encamped near Dhar and defeated Daya Bahadur. On the news of victory, Bajirao crossed the Narmada and came into Malwa to make arrangement for acquired territory. The settlement made by Shahu was confirmed. It was agreed that out of the revenues of newly acquired territories 31 per cent should be paid to the royal treasury, 30 per cent should be shared by each of Shinde and Holkar and 9 per cent to go to Pawar.[84]

Jai Singh did not make any serious attemspt to oust the Marathas from Malwa. He perceived that the only practicable policy that could succeed in the circumstances was the policy of appeasement which could be his sympathies for Marathas. The immunity of Malwa was to be secured by granting to Raja Shahu a Jagir in Malwa worth ten lakhs of rupees a year. The Raja's demand of Chauth from the province, it was expected, would keep his generals in check and would prevent the raids of his chiefs. The written undertakings were exchanged with Dado Bhimsen, Shahu Raja's envoy and Deepsingh an eminent Rajput was deputed to the Maratha court in 1730. To create a friendly relation, the Raja had surrendered the important fortress of Mandogarh captured by Holkar. In those circumstances, before the negotiations could be completed, a change took

place in the imperial court. Jai Singh was transferred and Muhammad Khan Bangash was sent to Malwa.

Chhatrasal Bundela invited his aid to repel the aggression of Muhammad Khan Bangash. Chhatrasal, who was actively aiding the Hindu revival sent an urgent request to Bajirao for help. Bangash pursued the fugitives and scattered them; Chhatrasal took shelter in the fort of Mahoba. Bajirao surrendered Bangash in his camp and starved out. At last Bangash was forced to retire from Bundelkhand and come to the agreement not to attack them again. After this Chhatrasal came to look on the Peshwa as his son and gave one-third of his kingdom to Bajirao. Thus, the Marathas secured a foothold in the Bundelkhand. Bajirao's later acquisition brought the Marathas in direct touch with the Doab and the imperial city of Agra. Afterwards Bangash realised the helplessness of this situation and made agreement with the Marathas.[85]

Emperor tried to push Marathas from Malwa, Khan Durani was sent against the Peshwa. While Khan Durani was yet at Kotah, a meeting with the Maratha chiefs was arranged by the mediation of Sawai Jai Singh on 24 March 1735.[86] Khan Durani agreed to pay 22 lacs of rupees to the Marathas as Chauth of Malwa and secure Peshwa's demands, arranged a visit to the Emperor. Peshwa had presented his demands to the imperial government.

The right of Sardeshpandya, the right of collecting 5 per cent of the revenue of the Deccan to Bajirao. After the sudden dash to Delhi in 1736 Peshwa received government of Malwa in addition to 3 lacs of rupees. By this expedition Marathas expanded their power in the north Hindustan. This expedition marks Bajirao's rise and consolidation of Shahu's position further.[87]

Expansion of Maratha Power in the Deccan:

In the Konkan the presence of foreigners, the Siddis, the Portuguese and the English with their headquarters at Janjira, Goa and Bombay, was an eyesore to the Marathas. Shahu's Sarkhel Kanhoji Angre was a check on the further ambitions of the Siddis and a danger to the power of the rest. He considered the Siddis as his chief enemies and especially so because they retained possession of Raigad. However, an immediate cause of Maratha attention to the Konkan was an influential Hindu ascetic named Brahmendra Swami. He took up his residence in a lonely jungle spot near Chiplun. The Swami built a large temple for Parashuram and collected funds for that purpose. Angres and even the Siddis held the Swami in high reverence and contributed money, land and other gifts for the shrine. But the famous elephant incident led to the complete destruction of

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the temple of Parashuram and to this Brahmendra Swami had highly incensed "Shook from his feet the dust of the Konkan and ascending the Ghat went to live in Dhavadshi".[88] Dhavadshi near Satara where he then erected new edifice and where an annual celebration for his deity is still held. The Swami appealed pathetically to Shahu and the leading Maratha commanders calling upon them to wage a relentless war against the Siddi of Janjira.

The fort of Anjanwel and Goulkot held by Siddi were in the vicinity of the shrine at Chiplun. In 1729-30 the Pratinidhi at the behest of Shahu also arrived soon after for some diplomatic contrivance against Siddi. But the Pratinidhi did not accomplish anything appreciable. On the other hand after the death of Kanhoji (1727) the Siddis had taken advantage of the family feud between Angre's sons.[89] Early in 1730 the campaign was renewed when the Pratinidhi was sent towards Kolaba and Ratnagiri. This campaign was not successful because -

(1) The Pratinidhi was soon recalled to take the command of the army against Sambhaji in 1730.

(2) Shekhoji, the son of Kanhoji, would not help the Pratinidhi at the instigation of Bajirao's rival.[90]

Sambhaji (Kanhoji's son) was fanned by Bajirao and Brahmendra Swami. After the Dabhai expedition Bajirao resolved to take the languishing affairs of the Konkan. In 1732 Bajirao moved to Konkan to meet Shekhoji Angre and formed a plan with him. The death of Siddi Rasul Yakat, the chief of the Siddis (1733) gave a signal for a civil war and Bajirao at once took the fortresses of Tala, Chosala, Dandarajpuri and opened the campaign against Siddis.[91]

The want of unity between the different feudatory chieftains, loss of control of the sea compelled Bajirao to make peace with Siddis in December 1733.[92] Abdul Rahman was recognised as the chief of Janjira and the Marathas retained the fortresses of Raigad and Mahad. Five and a half Mahals of the Siddis were added to the Maratha kingdom and the rest of the conquered territory was restored to the Siddis. The treaty crippled the Siddi's power. Bajirao then returned to Satara early in 1734. The important posts Goalkot and Anjanwel which were in the neighbourhood of the shrine of Parshuram remained in the hands of the Siddis. Siddisat had taken offensive and raided the Maratha land. In this struggle for the possession of Bankot Maratha commanders distinguished themselves. Shahu became all the more impatient and sent Chimaji Appa and Pilaji Jadhav against Siddisat. A bloody battle was fought near Rewa (1736) in which

SHIVAJI UNIV. (LIB.) KOLH.

Siddisat[93] and Siddi Yakub were killed and victory was won by the Marathas.

Brahmendra Swami congratulated Chimaji Appa on the victory, "By killing Siddisat a demon of the type of Ravan you have uprooted the very life of Siddis and earned an undying fame". Shahu showered upon Chimaji Appa honours, costly ornaments and dresses including a sword set with diamonds. Shahu's court paid homage to Brahmendra Swami as their Guru. After this Brahmendra Swami remained peacefully till his death in 1746. His temple of Parashuram still commemorates his life endeavour in its pristine grandeur. Shahu paid homage to him. What Ramdas was for Shivaji, Brahmendra Swami was for Shahu.

When the Siddis and Angres were reduced to insignificance, only the Portuguese power remained. In 1730 at the suggestion of Antaji Raghunath and Ramchandra Raghunath, Bajirao sent Desai and Deshpande of Malad to Bassein and this campaign led to a temporary peace with Marathas. But with the change of Viceroy at Goa, a policy of aggression was started.

Chimaji Appa was appointed as general of the whole Maratna army and took field in November 1738. In this campaign Portuguese garrison admirably conducted the defence in the face of the repeated onslaught of the Marathas. The city was doomed though the Portuguese

were defending their position with the courage of despair. Never before or after did the Marathas display such extraordinary vigour, skill and perseverence. The siege of Goa was pressed on genuine valour and true soldierly spirit of Chimaji Appa and vigour of Vyankatrao Ghorpade. The peace treaty was made in 1739 promising to pay 40 per cent of the royal revenue to the Marathas as annual tribute and an indemnity of one million and six thousand xerafins. This war entirely broke the power and prestige of the Portuguese on the west-coast and left Marathas masters of the situation. The power of the Marathas now rose beyond all comprehension.

Nadirshah, the Emperor of Persia had swept through Kabul and Punjab like a hurricane and had entered Delhi in 1739. He wanted to chastise the Marathas and intended an invasion of their country. This news threw Shahu into a state of consternation but Bajirao made vigorous preparation to meet the invader of his country. But Nadirshah went back from Delhi only. When he was touring through his Jahagirs, Bajirao was suddenly taken ill at Raver and expired on 25 April 1740.

It is not necessary to write separately about Bajirao and Maratha expansion. He made expansion of Maratha power under the Shahu's royal command. He always remembered that his authority emanated from the crown. And he had its roots in the confidence reposed in him

by the sovereign.[94] He attended the Raja occasionally and explained his motives and activities when he was distantly away. Bajirao made the highest position of the Maratha Chhatrapati and within twenty years extended the Maratha dominion in all directions, north, south, west and east. He felt that Shahu should have the supreme authority of India and the political centre of gravity should shift from Delhi to Satara. Shahu completely trusted the Peshwa and depended on his iron nerves for everything. Shahu at times used to warn his ministers if anything went wrong. In his dealing with the Nizam, Dabhade, Pratinidhi etc., Shahu was equally considerate. But the Peshwa Bajirao was using his authority for enlarging his own resources and promoting his own interests. His dealings with Dabhade and Angre were, to say the least, unfair and impolitic. Even the Raja on occasions felt the overgrown power of his minister and expressed his displeasure in sharp reprimands. Shahu saw that the Peshwa was overdoing Shahu and observed: "The Peshwa has done me real service only on one occasion - in repelling the Nizam. Otherwise his activities and conquests have been self-aggrandisement".[95]

Firstly, Bajirao's policy of conquest and expansion did not find favour with the King. Shahu was always grateful to the emperor and was averse to annexing

his territory. The policy of peace and consolidation was impractical at that particular time. So, Bajirao's policy was the best in that circumstance, and in the end he succeeded in converting the king to his view with his eloquence.

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of Gwalior and Pawar of Dhar.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SHAHU - LAST PHASE

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Shahu invested the eldest son of Bajirao, Balaji Bajirao alias Nanasaheb with robes of Peshwaship. He had been carefully trained in all affairs of the state. He had also received a fairly good martial training though he rarely accompanied his father to the battle-field. He received Peshwaship at Satara on 25 June 1740 (Ashadh Shuddha 12). Mahadoba Purandare was appointed Peshawa's Mutalik or deputy to look after the duties of the Peshwa's office in Satara in his absence. Shahu conferred on Peshwa the revenue of thirty villages in different places and issued the orders:

> *Chhatrapati reminded him of the great deeds of his father Bajirao who devotedly served the kind. He also told him that he had embarked on the campaign of crushing the Iranis and establishing an empire but was cut short. You are his son and you ought to consumate his policy of conquering the whole Hindustan, establish an empire and lead your horse beyond Attock.*[1]

The success that Nanasaheb achieved in implementing his father's policy bears ample testimony to his own ability and Shahu's right choice. Marathas had conquered and occupied the provinces of Gujarat, Malwa, Bundelkhand, Berar and other parts of the empire. Balaji

had to consolidate these conquests and to regularise these rights of Chouth and Sardeshmukhi acquired by Bajirao-I. Nanasaheb's succession was not without opposition. Babaji Naik Joshi a banker and a great favourite of Shahu came forth as a competitor. Raghuji Bhosale of Nagpur supported Babaji's claims because Shahu had no son and Raghuji wanted his son to be adopted. But Shahu turned a deaf ear to Babaji Naik, and conferred the robes on Balaji without delay.

Peshwa Nanasaheb steadily kept some objects before his mind during the twenty-one years of his office. Balaji's Peshwaship may be divided into two periods. One from 1740 to 1749 and another from 1749 to 1761. The first period ends with the death of Shahu. In this the Peshwa was somewhat restrained by the Raja because he tried to control him in policy and movements. Peshwa had realised the necessity of uniting the two branches of Maratha State, Satara and Kolhapur, into one. Shahu had no longer any prospects of a son being born to him. The question of succession had begun to press the attention of the sovereign and his Peshwa. Only male member of great Shivaji's family was Sambhaji of Kolhapur and he had paid visit to Shahu at Satara in 1740-41.[2] Shahu would never consent to Sambhaji succeeding him.

External Politics:

When Nanasaheb took over the office of the Peshwa, the condition, in general, of the Maratha affairs was:

(1) Bajirao had his eye on the Subhedarship of Malwa which had almost come into his grasp by his victory over the Nizam at Bhopal. But Nadirshah's invasion and the Peshwa's sudden death prevented the consummation. The invasion also eroded the prestige of the Marathas in Delhi court at least temporarily.

(2) The Siddi, Angres, Portuguese and English stillsd obstructed the smooth working of Maratha court.

(3) There was a need for raising financial resources and controlling the same.

(4) There was a constant opposition of some old ministers and sardars to the Peshwa and there was also a need for making administrative arrangement of the conquered territory.

Bajirao's extensive campaigns strained the finances which had already been in a crippled condition owing to the Jahagirdari system. Nanasaheb had to find money to the tune of Rs. 14 lakhs and a half which was the debt his father had incurred. The Peshwa pressed Murarrao

Ghorpade at Trichinopoly to levy contribution from the surrounding country and remit to him Rs. 20,000 a year from the revenue of Arcot. Mahadji Purandare also paid the debt of Babuji Naik, the creditor and saved the Peshwa from his harassment.[3] He also secured some financial help.

When he felt comparatively free from the financial embarrassment he called his envoy Mahadev Bhat Hingne from Delhi. They met at Poona alongwith Malharrao Holkar, Ramchandra Bawa, Pilajirao Jadhav and Avaji Kavade who had returned from his duties in Bundelkhand. Peshwa should proceed to the north at once personally ascertaining views and secure the cooperation of Jaysingh. This was the fourth successive expedition which Peshwa personally had to undertake to Northern India during 1740-1749.

The first expedition was known as Dholpur expedition. Peshwa entered Rajputana via Bhilsa and met Sawai Jay Singh at Dholpur and tried to settle through him Maratha-Mughal relations. He received 15 lakhs from the emperor, and was promised a farman for Chauth and Sardeshmukhi of Malwa. The second expedition was known as Bengal expedition. Peshwa passed through Bundelkhand and entered the provinces of Bihar and Bengal to establish his claim over these provinces for Chauth and Sardeshmukhi. But conflict arose between Peshwa and Raghuji.

The third campaign of Balaji took place in 1744-45 to settle the affairs in Rajasthan and Bundelkhand. And the fourth expedition was undertaken in 1747. Peshwa wanted to help Emperor against Ahmad Shah Abdali. It is not necessary to dilate on these expeditions in detail here.

Shahu Reconciles Peshwa and Raghuji Bhosale:

Shahu gave the title Sena-Saheb-Subha to Parasoji Bhosale in 1708. He was a prominent noble from Shahu's side. Raja Shahu gave him a Jagir in Vardha and Gondavan.[4] Raghuji Bhosale was the grandson of Parasoji Bhosale, who died in 1709. Raghuji accepted the title Sena-Saheb-Subha on 28 March 1723[5] and extended his Jagir in East India and Gondavan. He had conquered a large portion of Gondavan and pushed his frontiers to the borders of Malwa. Raghuji invaded Alipur and killed Sajatkhan. Raghuji brought enormous wealth from this province. He gave no share to the Chhatrapati nor he had obtained Chhatrapati's permission to undertake the said expedition. This gave annoyance to Bajirao, who always insisted that the Raja Shahu's authority should ever be respected. Thus Bhosale came in conflict with the Peshwa.

Raghuji Bhosale was a capable person but the

spirit of defiance displayed by him led to much trouble obstructing the advance of the Maratha power. The Peshwa had to solicit the help of Chhatrapati to check this spirit of Raghuji. Shahu ordered him to meet him but he denied that.[6] Bajirao-I left Poona in 1739 to adjust the affairs with Raghuji Bhosale. Peshwa wished to impress on him the necessity of obeying the Chhatrapati's authority. But he was defeated in 1739 near Baramati. This was another and fresh instance of Raghuji Bhosale's disregard of the authority of Chhatrapati.

The Peshwa, however, chanced to meet Raghuji Bhosale, when Karnatak affairs were discussed. Bajirao succeeded in persuading Bhosale to undertake the expedition, in which much wealth was to be obtained. Raghuji Bhosale received definite orders from the Chhatrapati in this regard.[7]

In 1739 Peshwa Bajirao returned to Poona from his memorable expedition. The policy of the Peshwa was to consult his gracious sovereign, the Chhatrapati on all important subjects. Bajirao intended to destroy the Mughal throne, while Shahu had respect for the Mughal emperor. Seeing the opportunity to expand the Maratha power, Raghuji Bhosale secured Sanad from Shahu in 1738 to the effect that he should collect the Chouth from the eastern field of Bengal as his exclusive sphere

for the levy of Chauth. "The subhas of Lucknow, Kaksudabad, Bundelkhand, Allahabad, Patna, Dacca and Bihar were made over as Raghuji's field of activity". This was rough demarcation with no idea of definite boundary. And thus conflict started between Peshwa and Raghuji. He was the supporter of Babuji Naik, who had come forth as a competitor to Balaji for the Peshwaship.

Peshwa Nanasaheb - Raghuji Bhosale:

After the death of Bajirao-I in 1740 Balaji Bajirao became Peshwa. The Peshwa as an executor explained to the Chhatrapati the necessity of strengthening the Maratha position not only in Malwa and Bundelkhand but also in the territories towards the east. Peshwa occupied Bundelkhand and appointed Naro Shankar to its management. Raghuji, with the help of Babaji Naik and Damaji Gaikwad had arranged the contest against Peshwa[8] in Gujarat and Malwa. But Peshwa despatched Pawar and Holkar to prevent that expedition. The presence of both at Satara in June 1741 created some sensational developments with which Shahu could not cope.

In the Karnataka expedition Fatehsingh Bhosale did not make any concrete gain. Shahu ordered Pratinidhi, Raghuji Bhosale and Peshwa for carrying on the Karnatak expedition. Under the order from the Chhatrapati Murarrao Ghorpade also joined the army. The combined Maratha

army attacked Dost Ali, the Nawab of Pyneghatt and killed him. His Diwan Meer Asad was taken prisoner by the Marathas. Dost Ali's son Safdar Ali, however, made peace with the Marathas by giving them much wealth and assuring his help to conquer Trichinopoly.

Trichinopoly was under the authority of Chand Sahib. He was the son-in-law of Mughal Governor. After this event a notable incident that took place was that Raja Pratapsingh of Tanjore threw himself upon Shahu's protection.[9] After the death of Raja Shahaji (Shivaji's father) his son continued as the prince of Tanjore. The Chhatrapati of Satara entertained an affectionate kinship and extended his helping hand whenever the Tanjore rulers needed it. At the same time Shahu had always been anxious to establish Maratha rule in this region. In 1737 he himself started his expedition but could not capture the place. To protect Raja Pratapsingh Shahu despatched Raghuji and Fatehsingh Bhosale with large force and with instructions to drive out Chand Saheb from Trichinopoly. The Marathas, under Raghuji Bhosale, took the city on 26 March 1741. Chand Saheb was captured and sent to Satara in custody.

Raghuji's brilliant success in Karnataka and capture of Chand Saheb naturally gave him place in the Raja's favour. He was upon his return received with special gift in open darbar at Satara.

Bengal Politics:

In Bengal Surfraz Khan was killed and Aliwardis Khan seized the Nawabship in 1740. He paid two crores of rupees to the Emperor and obtained from him the confirmation of his appointment. But there was a strong faction at the Nawab's court headed by Mir Habid, who was deputy Nawab of Orissa. He remained loyal to his master (Murshid Gali Khan) to the last and even when he was defeated by Aliwardi Khan. He had unsuccessfully attempted to engage the Marathas in his master's cause. Bhaskar Ram who was deputy of Raghuji, was disinclined to undertake major operation in Bengal. Raghuji was informed of the political changes in Bengal, and of the offers received from Mir Habid. Raghuji dreaded the new Peshwa's ambitious views towards the provinces and decided to forestall him by sending his army eastward. He was, naturally, anxious to have an independent field for his activities, and readily grasped the offer made to him by Mir Habid. At the same time Peshwa was strengthening his position in north. Such was the state of affairs when Nanasaheb and Raghuji, the two Sardars of the same state came face to face.

Raghuji and Peshwa Clash:

While the Peshwa was strengthening his position

in the north, he came in clash with Raghuji on account of revenue of Bengal. Raghuji had sent his agent to Satara for the strong protest before Shahu in 1742. He kept under his restraint Trimbakrao Vishvanath Pethe, the Peshwa's commandant. This Trimbakrao suffered imprisonment for a short time and was released after Shahu had sent his own emissaries to Raghuji for this purpose.[10]

In the meantime Aliwardi Khan was actively strengthening his own position, expecting an onslaught both from Raghuji and Nanasaheb. To save himself he appealed to the Emperor for military help. The Peshwa on his part communicated his readiness to help the Emperor if the Chauth of Malwa, Bundelkhand and Allahabad was granted to him. Emperor promised to confer the same on him and ordered Aliwardi Khan to pay the Peshwa's expenses.

The Peshwa attacked and defeated Raghuji's army. Having achieved this success in north Hindustan, Peshwa returned to Poona on 31 July 1743. He thereafter sent to Satara to pay his respect to the Chhatrapati. During his stay at Satara the Peshwa submitted to the Chhatrapati the list of the accounts of the expedition. He explained the items of credit and expenditure and showed satisfactory balance.

Raghuji Bhosale understanding the situation wrote a most friendly letter to the Peshwa soliciting

the Peshwa's goodwill and alliance.[11] Shahu summoned both to his court. In his presence an agreement was signed by both on 31 August 1743. According to the agreement:

(1) All territory from Berar to the east right up to Cuttac, Bengal and Lucknow was assigned to Raghuji, with which Peshwa was not to interfere.

(2) The territory of west of this including Ajmer, Prayag and Malwa was exclusive sphere of the Pesdhwa.[12]

After this agreement Peshwa and Raghuji both bound their spheres. Both were completely reconciled in the presence of Chhatrapati. Shahu called upon both of them to lay their hands on his feet and swear that they would never harbour suspicion about each other. This amicable settlement thus led to happy results. Raghuji Bhosale was allowed to have force in his command to invade the eastern provinces. Bhosale stopped his endeavours to cripple the Peshwa's power. This also put an end to Raghuji's aspiring for Satara throne after Shahu's demise. As per this treaty it was also decided that Damaji Gaikwad should submit the account of the amount of the tribute collected by him in Malwa to the Peshwa.

The Chhatrapati was highly pleased with Balaji Bajirao's skill, foresight and devotion to his sovereign

and as a mark of approbation of the Peshwa's eminent service Shahu conferred on Peshwa the fresh Sanad authorising him to conquer as much territory as possible beyond the present limits. This was a glorious triumph of Peshwa's policy of extension of Maratha power, as well as the policy of Raghuji Bhosale.

Shahu, Babaji Naik and Angre Brothers:

Raghuji Bhosale and Babaji Naik were in Karnataka conducting important operation of Trichinopoly. In this contest Chandsaheb was imprisoned and Marathas got the victory. Shahu personally took no interest in Chandsaheb beyond insisting that Trichinopoly should be permanently transferred to the Marathas. Taking advantage of Raghuji and Peshwa conflict in Bengal, Nizam-ul-Mulk seized Trichinopoly.

Shahu was distressed on that loss. He had assigned the Karnatak Subha to Babaji Naik and it was now left to him to retrieve the Maratha's position consequent on the Nizam interference.[13] Babaji Naik started from Satara in 1744 with the intention of taking Trichinopoly, but it ended in total failure and his own complete ruin. Naik returned to Satara in frustration,[14] renewed his efforts and suffered a similar miserable failure again in 1746. He incurred huge debts which he was unable to repay and endured great ignominy and misery.

He had attributed it to the apathy of Shahu and his Peshwa towards his interest. He threatened to starve himself to death and had even taken recourse to poison.[15] It was detected in time and his life was saved.

Shahu became helpless in this matter. At the very time Shahu's illness and death of Virubai made him restless. He consigned the whole affair to the discretion of the Peshwa and he despatched Sadashivrao Bhau who possessed superior resources and won a number of victories. In this Peshwa's silent diplomacy triumphed. He contacted Nizam's minister Sayid Laskar Khan and won him over to his side. He successfully nullified all the efforts of Naik to improve his position either at the Nizam's court or anywhere in Karnataka. Thus Babaji Naik accepted the authority of Peshwa.

Angre Brothers:

In the Konkan affairs Siddi Sat was defeated by Chimaji Appa in 1739. But the two important posts Goalkot and Anjanwel remained in the hands of Siddi. The dispute arose among the Angre brothers over the succession issue after Sekhoji's death on 12 January 1742. Before this Angrian estate came to be divided into two, Sambhaji had been posted to Vijaydurg with the title of 'Sarkhel' and his brother Manaji at Kulaba as 'Wazarat Maab' known as 'Kulaba dispute'.

After the death of Sambhaji, Manaji went to Satara and requested Shahu to make him Sarkhel. Shahu was anxious to get back two important posts, Anjanwel and Goalkota from Siddi's possession. Shahu declared that he would confer the Sarkhelship upon him who would capture those two places. The two brothers Manaji and Tulaji at once undertook the enterprise, Yamaji Shivadev, the Pratinidhi's Mutalik stood guarantee for him. Shahu conferred the Sarkhel's dignity on Tulaji in 1743,[16] and helped him with troops and funds. Tulaji with great heroism captured Anjanwel and Goalkota and immediately communicated the happy news to the Chhatrapati.[17]

After this victory Tulaji went to Satara and paid visit to the Maharaj on 3 May 1747. Great respect was shown but Tulaji's grievances against the Peshwa were not removed to his satisfaction. Tulaji was a man of temperament and would not bend before the Peshwa. At the very time Manikgad which belonged to Manaji, was forcibly taken by Ramaji Mahadev, at the instance of Peshwa in 1748. Manaji went to Satara and worked his way through the influence of Rani Sagunabai. Peshwa gave back the fort of Manikgad to Manaji.[18] In the meantime Tulaji started depredation in Peshwa's territory. The Pratinidhi, the Amatya of Bavada, Sawant of Wadi and Peshwa, they all suffered Tulaji's aggression. They pooled their resources and Tulaji was defeated

in 1748.

End of a Glorious Reign:

The reign of pious king Shahu had secured footing in Maharashtra. His armies had over-run the whole of India from Delhi in the north to Rameshwar in the South, and from Gujarat in the West to Bengal in the East. The last days of this pious King were saddened through domestic worries, financial embarrassment[19] and the question of succession. Chhatrapati Shahu with advancing age became helpless, and wished that some affectionate Sardars and friends to be in his contact every time everywhere. From 1743 Shahu's health had been visibly declining. During this period Peshwa was found strong enough to control the situation.

Shahu's illness was a signal for a host of court intrigues of rival factions, and internal quarrels of the Ranis.[20] On 24 December 1740 his illegitimate wife Virubai died. Shahu's household were for long, satisfactorily controlled by his illegitimate wife Virubai, a capable woman. Shahu had always treated her rather as a queen than a concubine and she ruled with rod of iron over the inmates of royal Zanana. She most carefully and lovingly looked after the personal comfort of the King and exercised a healthy control over the two queens. After the death of Virubai household

management came on the decline. The two queens interfered in the administration and carried on incessant intrigue. Shahu loved the younger wife Sagunabai better as she was soft hearted and not so violent openly. But she revolted against the tyranny which the elder queen sought to impose her. The queens to their selfish animosities accepted the Saranjams and Jagirs, and worked as theirs. Shahu became so feeble and helpless that he would not allow the Peshwa to move away from his side.[21]

Peshwa wrote to Ramchandra Baba -

> *I have been unavoidably detained at court. The debts contracted by the Maharaja, the enormous sums of money required by the queens, and their constant quarrels have so engrossed the Maharaja's attention, that he has no time to consider the matter of state which I put before him.*[22]

The court took a side for and against the two infuriated ladies. At last Raja Shahu had to call in the Peshwa to settle the dispute between them. Peshwa drew up rules for the guidance of the Ranis at Shahu's request to the effect that:

(1) Neither Rani should quarrel with the other.

(2) The Raja should grant to each Rani similar cash allowance and lands.

(3) All Jagirs in the occupation of the Ranis without

Sanad should be surrendered.

(4) The Ranis should not requisition supplies of money from towns or districts alienated to Shiledars (cavalry soldiers) or mokasadars.

(5) The Ranis should not seize lands in other personal Saranjams or Jagirs.

(6) The Ranis should not confiscate Deshmukhiship or Vatan.

(7) Whenever one Rani gets present of land other Rani should also receive similar one.

(8) The Ranis should not take sides in disputes arising in the capital.

(9) The Ranis should not hear the case brought by creditors against their debtors.

(10) The Ranis should not levy taxes or tolls.[23]

Thus, Shahu made rules for reconciliation between the two Ranis. Both Ranis accepted these terms. This would continue for ever.

Shahu's troubles were aggravated by the death of Shripatrao Pratinidhi, his life long friend. On 25 November 1746 Pratinidhi Shripatrao died. He was politically a nonentity but in private life he was constant associate of Shahu for over thirty years. The Maharaja appointed his younger brother Jagjivan alias Dadoba to a vacant post. But he never filled

this in Shahu's heart the gap caused by the loss of his dearest friend. After this Shahu became mentally weak. Jivaji Khanderao Chitnis died on 6 January 1743. He was hereditary secretary and a devoted servant of Shahu. Shahu had favourite elephant named Madari. He was a huge, beautiful animal and always most docile even when in ruts. One night he got loose, fell in a well and died. This incident threw Shahu into the deepest despair. This deprived him of all relish in life and he felt that his own end was not long in coming.

Peshwa Dismissed:

In his last days Shahu relied more and more on Peshwa Balaji Bajirao. He did not allow him to move away, for fear of some danger. This attitude of the King increased the jealousy of the court circle and of his opponents. The Pratinidhi, Raghuji Bhosale and Rani Sakwarbai, taking advantage of the troubled and restless condition of Shahu, opened negotiation with Sambhaji of Kolhapur. Peshwa's opponents poured into the King's ears all sorts of bitter complaints against the Peshwa.[24] Tired of these intrigues, Shahu much against his own will took the desperate step of dismissing Peshwa from his office in 1747. The Peshwa willingly acquiesced. He resigned office and kept aloof from the affairs of state. Peshwa was residing in a tent

near Satara waiting to receive a call from Shahu.

Shahu sent him a message with Govindrao Chitnis, that he was deprived of his office and that he need not wait. Peshwa quietly accepted the order and returned all the insignia pertaining to his office.[25] Upon this Shahu hurriedly called Raghuji Bhosale from Nagpur, to take charge of the affairs of the state. Raghuji arrived with his son Mudhoji with the intention[26] that Shahu should adopt his son as successor. But Raghuji did not consider it worth his while to undertake the responsibility of managing the Maratha state. His own independent field of Nagpur supplied him with a more lucrative area for his talents than Satara. Raghuji had a secret understanding with the Peshwa which kept him from meddling with the affairs of Satara.[27]

The news of the Peshwa's dismissal spread like wild fire and created confusion in the affairs of the state. The Angre brothers started fresh trouble in Konkan. Sambhaji and his shrewd wife Jijabai instigated Murarrao Ghorpade to invade Shahu's territory. The Nizam-ul-Mulk and his sons also thought of making gain out of this crisis in the Maratha state. Peshwa knew the working of the King's mind better. Because Shahu dismissed Peshwa due to the intrigue between Ranis, Peshwa's diplomacy towards Babaji Naik and the incapability of Peshwa in paying the debts.[28] Shahu saw that none

of the conspirators was equal to the task of managing the state affairs. So, he restored the Peshwa to his office on 12 April 1747.[29]

Search for Successor:

After the restoration of Peshwaship, Balaji Bajirao had assured Shahu about the repayment of his debts. He had made repeated requests for permission to go out on an expedition for this purpose.[30] But in the question of succession he had adopted neutrality. However, he had established a secret contact with Sambhaji (1741) for succession after Shahu's death. Rani Sakwarbai also supported this secret move. Peshwa knew that this arrangement would be inoperative and quietly pacified nearly all his antagonists and started his Newai expedition in 1747. Peshwa had assured Sambhaji then that he would support his succession after the death of Shahu.[31]

Shahu's last days were restless owing to the question of succession. The dying Shahu became quick-tempered and peevish. He had desired to spend his last days in Vanaprasthashram. At this time the death of his junior wife Sagunabai on 25 August 1748 snapped the last ties of his earthly affections. He had started the work of a permanent structure at Mahuli, and grass hut for himself at Vanavaswadi, a place between Mahuli

and Satara. He finally got disgusted with palace life and its intrigues and selfish bickerings. During these last two years he was constantly attended by his confidential secretary Govindrao Chitnis and his intimate adviser Devrao Meghashyam and Yashwantrao Potnis. The Peshwa was called up from Poona whenever necessary.

Shahu's anxiety was great with respect to the question of succession. He had no son to succeed him. Sagunabai gave birth to a child in 1727, but the child died at the age of three.[32] He had two sons, Yesaji and Kusaji, by a concubine named Laxmibai.[33] But in Maharashtra there was no tradition allowing succession either to daughters or to illegitimate sons. The only other direct descendant of Shivaji was Shahu's cousin, Sambhaji of Kolhapur. But Shahu did not give weight to the claim of Sambhaji. He had never found any special capacity or discerning power in Sambhaji.[34] He was already aged and had no son. Afterwards, again there was a possibility for the adoption of a son. He decided to adopt a suitable boy, either from a collateral branch of the Bhosale family or to take Rajput boy from the north. So, Netaji, brother of Raja Jagat Singh of Udaipur, was brought to Satara. But Netaji was called upon to succeed to the Jagir of Bagor, and Shahu's plan failed.

While the affairs stood in this unsettled condition, Tarabai surprised Shahu by sending him a message that

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he need not seek a boy for adoption from the distant family when a boy of the direct line, her own grandson was there. At Satara fort the aged queen Tarabai was at this time a nominal prisoner but otherwise a respectable old relation. She had a grandson, who was born to Bhavanibai, wife of Shivaji II, three months after the death of her husband at Panhala. The son named Ramraja had been brought up secretly at Pangaon for the fear of Sambhaji of Kolhapur. Shahu decided to accept it and sent his chitnis Govindrao to Tarabai and got in writing the statement from her. Shahu invited Bhagawantrao Amatya to Satara, who was privy to the secretly bringing up of Shivaji's son. Bhagwantrao was asked to vouchsafe for the truth of the story by a solemn oath taken in the holy waters of the Krishna at Mahuli. After this was done, doubts were removed.

Sakwarbai, the elder queen rejected the adoption and plainly told Shahu, that she would adopt another boy and frustrate the plan of Tarabai.[35] Shahu quietly reasoned with her that, her plan would be a probability of a war of succession. Shahu actually sent Govindrao Chitnis to some of the prominent sardars, to ascertain whether they had to offer any better plan for the future governance of Maratha state. He tried to know whether any of them was prepared to shoulder the responsibilities of the state in opposition of Peshwa. Chitnis

faithfully reported that no body was prepared to shoulder the responsibility and no body offered a better plan. Shahu explained the public opinion to Rani, but Sakwarbai began taking active step. She took the Pratinidhi and his Mutalik Yamaji Shivadev into her confidence. She began to enlist troops and increase her following, preparing for an armed conflict if necessary. Shahu saw the danger and informed Peshwa to collect strong force to meet the danger.

Shahu's last illness began in August 1749, and his condition went on deteriorating day by day. Domestic and outside worries accelerated the pace of death. His only surviving wife Sakwarbai removed him from his hut to the Rangmahal on the slopes of the Satara fort. She had completely stopped the Peshwa, the Chitnis and their partisans from having access to the King's apartments.[36] Yemaji Shivdev's brother, Antaji Shivdev was deputed to keep a close watch on the activities of Tarabai. At this time Sakwarbai made an attempt to take into her hands the administration of the state and called Sambhaji to Kolhapur for help. Shahu learnt it, he sent word to Sambhaji through Bapuji Khanderao telling him not to meddle with Satara affairs. Sambhaji wisely returned and happily a civil war was averted.

Shahu realised that if he brought in Ramraja and completed the adoption in his presence, Sakwarbai

would most certainly create trouble. Because when he was on death bed in Rangmahal palace at Satara, the queen prevented all to have access to the Raja. Peshwa Balaji found opportunity to contact Shahu and obtained from him two royal rescripts sometime on 10 October 1749. These Yadis or rescripts were written by Shahu in his own hand but it appears that the Peshwa had dictated the words.[37] According to Sardesai, Shahu copied the draft in his own hand from the original draft prepared by some experts. The original Yadis as translated by Sardesai are as follows:

RESCRIPT NO. 1

> *Balaji Pradhan Pandit is hereby commanded. You should collect the troops, several others were similarly asked but they do not accept. I could not write this before. Nor do I hope to recover. The concern of the state must be protected. Therefore, you should take steps to continue the succession. Do not bring in Kolhapur. I have explained matters to the Chitnis. You should conduct the affairs of the state under the orders of the one who would succeed to the throne. I have every confidence in the Chitnis. You should work in co-operation with him. Whoever becomes the Chhatrapati, he will not interfere with your management. May you act wisely.*

RESCRIPT NO. 2

> *Balaji Pandit Pradhan is commanded. We feel confident you will carry out the responsibility of the Raj. I was sure of this myself and Chitnis confirmed me in my view. You have my blessings and my palm is laid on your head. Whoever comes as a Chhatrapati will continue you in the office of the minister. If he does not, my curse be on him. You should continue your service in obedience to him. Do preserve the state. What more can I write? You are wise enough.*[38]

These two small orders have since become the most memorable state document. Historians' remarks on these documents are different. Dr. H.N. Sinha says -

> *These two letters make the Peshwa not only the head of Civil Government but also of the military. To him Shahu entrusts the kingdom and its warfare. His office is made hereditary. Indeed, in clearest terms does Shahu make the Peshwa responsible for the continuance of the government and of the dynasty.*[39]

Riyasatkar Sardesai thinks -

> *These two yadis mean that Shahu had given the Sanad for the entire management of the Maratha state to the Peshwa. The yadis also make it abundantly clear that no Sardars were prepared to accept the responsibility of managing the states. He accepted Ramraja*

> *for adoption. Shahu's order that Peshwa's office should not be removed from the house of Balaji by the future descendants of the house of the Bhosale, was in tune with Shahu's nature. This example proves the great impact of the doctrine of hereditary succession in Hindu society of the period.*[40]

Kincaid and Parasnis wrote - "In these (rescripts) he (Shahu) conferred on him (Peshwa Balaji Bajirao) and his family the post of hereditary first minister. Having done so, he gave Balaji his blessings."[41] Although the Yadis were written by Shahu in his own hand, doubts have been expressed on the mental fitness of the Raja, while he executed the Yadis. Grant Duff says that, "Shahu was for sometime 'in a state of mental imbecility ... He was ... afflicted with that harmless ailly madness which is sometimes ludicrous, even whilst it excites commiseration".[42]

Shahu ordered the Peshwa that, there was no competent member in the council, not even Senapati. The Chhatrapati had to rely upon Peshwa, although Peshwa's motives were not unselfish. Peshwa had become supreme by elipsing the other members of the council. Knowing this well that the Peshwa was the only capable person fit for a gigantic task, Shahu gave a sort of 'Mukhtyar' with authority and power to him. That memorable Sanad made the Peshwa a sort of king-maker with the only

restriction on his authority that he should not bring anyone from Kolhapur. This order had hardly left any choice for the Peshwa but to obey the Chhatrapati and to maintain all the chiefs with their Saranjams and other interests and privileges. Peshwa had to accept the heavy responsibility to maintain the pattern of administration as it existed during Shahu's regime.

It is clear from this, that Shahu deserves credit for having made the most possible arrangement for the future Maratha state. The orders were conveyed to the Peshwa through the Chitnis early in October 1749. After that Shahu expired at his palace Rangmahal at Shahunagar on Friday morning of the 15th of December 1749 at 8 O'clock. According to Hindu calendar it was Margashirsh Krishna 3 of Shake 1671.[43]

Tarabai came down from Satara fort to have a look of Shahu. She advised Govindrao "to arrange to see that Sakwarbai becomes Sati. If she lives she will create trouble for the raj".[44] There is another account of this episode. It was stated that after the death of Shahu Govindrao Chitnis, Nanasaheb, the Pratinidhi, Akkalkot, Fatehsingh Bhosale, Dabhade and other major Sardars decided that Sakwarbai should become Sati. Malhar Ramrao Chitnis says, "Having blocked all the raods and avenues of the city and having posted sentinels round the palace and arsenals, the Peshwa with Govindrao

and Sardar came to the house of Kunwarji Shirke to know "What was the intention of Bai Saheb. Whether she would act according to the commands of the dead king or become Sati". G.S. Sardesai thinks "that guilt of forcing Sakwarbai to immolate herself lay on the Peshwa and council jointly. And Grand Duff said that "Balaji Bajirao was entirely responsible for bringing about this cowardly murder".

Sakwarbai was an ambitious, arrogant and intriguing woman. She aimed at securing power; but her ambition was shattered by the Peshwa. She thought that the scheme of putting Tarabai's grandson on the throne had succeeded on account of the combined efforts. Therefore, she chose to die rather than to live. When Sakwarbai determined to ascend the funeral pyre and sent orders for the preparation to be quickly made, exactly at that moment the message was received that the Pratinidhi and Yamajipant were arrested and put in chain and were sent to Purandar. Peshwa put the fort of Satara under his own control. He stationed military guards round about Satara and sent a word to the queen. This shows that Peshwa was responsible for this. Peshwa first removed the partisans of Sakwarbai and then wanted to know her decision. Peshwa wanted to seize all power. He, therefore, removed Sakwarbai's obstacle. Alongwith Sakwarbai two of Shahu's concubines, namely, Lakshmi and Sakhu, became

Sati. Sakwarbai declared from her funeral pyre that, "Ramraja was a pretender and that Sambhaji alone was the rightful successor to the Satara throne".[45]

"Shahu, by his kind and obliging disposition, attracted the love of all his subjects, everyone felt that he alone had the full measure of his master's favour. He freely rewarded whatever service was rendered to the state, by means of inams, stipends or gifts, carefully concealing the shortcoming of his officers and servants and making the highest use of their good and strong points".

(Malhar Ramrao Chitnis)

During Shahu's long and eventful career extending over more than forty years, Maharashtra rose to greatness and prospered owing to his tactful and wise selection of men and measures. His piety and generosity were unbounded. He forgave even those who tried hard to harm him. His wisdom in seeking advise for selecting a right man for the right work and post is noteworthy. He had foresight to guard against the coming danger to the state. He had deep-rooted reverence for the Hindu religion. Shahu's Guru was Brahmendra Swami of Dhawadshi and Narayan Dixit who greatly influenced the Chhatrapati's dispositions.

Shahu could truly boast of being one who never

did a wrong to any body. Thousands of people had cause to remember him as their benefactor and blessed him in all sincerity. There was not much love lost between him and his cousin, Sambhaji of Kolhapur. He could not forget that his cousin had joined hands with Nizam and sent assasin to get him out of the way. Shahu never allowed his Peshwa or any other official to molest Sambhaji for any fault of his. The founders of the houses of Nagpur, Akkalkot, Dhar, Indore were all young boys whose capacity and valour were first recognised and rewarded by Shahu. Shahu treated all people alike, had a soft corner in his heart for everyone, who approached him. He kept a close watch over the actions of his subordinates to whom he had allotted separate spheres of influence. He called them to account for any wrong that they committed, reprimanded them and punished them.

Shahu had sorted out mutual quarrels and adjusted disputes between Senapati Dabhade and Peshwa, Peshwa and Pratinidhi, Peshwa Nanasaheb and Raghuji Bhosale, even Raja Shahu and Sambhaji. Shahu had a kind of superstitious faith in the success of whatever the members of the Peshwa family undertood. He wholeheartedly supported them. The Peshwas on their part served him with equal devotion and loyalty. They had all risked in accomplishing the great object of expanding Maratha

power.

Personally Shahu was neither a clever politician nor a capable commander. But he had innate commonsense and sympathetic heart which enabled him to detect these qualities in others and utilise them for his service. He rightly judged man's capacity and gave him a free hand. He particularly advanced the interests of the rayats. He wrote to his brother-in-law - "Do the rayats belong to you, that they should be freely robbed".[46] Shahu is rightly styled 'Punyashlok' by his contemporary writers. He had some peculiar traits and manners which he had formed in the midst of Muslim surroundings. He had large harem full of maids and female servants with eunuchs to guard them.[47]

Shahu had respect for the Mughal emperor at Delhi. It was difficult to convince Shahu about the sentimentality of his over respect for the Mughal Emperor. When Bajirao was in the north expedition, the Raja wrote to him in 1739 that "he had no desire to become the emperor. He only wants to see that the Mughal empire is well administered. It is better to renovate an old temple than to raise new one".[48]

Shahu's disposition was not active and military. He did not want to disturb the existing condition and vested interest. His vision was limited. He was not

able to coordinate and control the work of his ministers and sardars, nor could he coerce them into submission when necessary. Shahu never liked departure from the old order and acted on the principle of "create nothing new, destroy nothing old". He was not opposed to keeping the turbulent Maratha chief under the firm control of his chief minister, whose loyalty he never doubted. He would not allow the Peshwa to change the old order and bring on the new by way of reforms.

Raja Shahu always considered himself as one of the people. He freely mixed with them. He shared their joys and sympathiesd with their sorrows. During festivals, celebrations, dinners, marriage ceremonies he took active part with outsiders and observed how they fared. As a rule he went out hunting every morning, that was his only exercise and diversion. After breakfast he sat down for office work carefully disposing of every matter that came before him. It is stated that he passed orders on at least 500 matters or cases every-day.[49] Having been brought up in the midst of Muslim surroundings of the imperial camp, he was inclined towards Muslim manners and customs. He certainly smoked the Hukkah. He was similarly fond of hunting wild game and shooting birds. During the monsoon season he amused himself by fishing. He was equally fond of good garden and ordered the planting of rare fruits, flowers, trees

brought from different places.[50] He was equally fond of well bred horses and birds and knew their qualities and features. There was nothing private or secret in his life, he was accessible to anyone at all times.

Shahu certainly felt great respect for all religions. He started the practice of reciting the Khutba at Satara. He brought with him the preacher known as Khatib from the Emperor's camp. The Sanads conferring inams were issued to this Khatib.[51] The descendants of Khatibs are still living in Satara. Brahmendra Swami, Kacheshvar Bawa, Thakurdas Bawa, the Ramdasis and others were equally respected by him. After the fall of Bassein he took utmost care of Christian priests and places of worship.

Shahu in 1721 first took up his residence below the fort of Satara and caused his courtiers to build their own separate quarters adjoining his own. A town thus soon grew up which he named after himself - Shahunagar. The various wards of the town are named after the days of the week. In addition to this, Yado Gopal Peth (named after a faithful Sardar of Raja Shahu), Vankatpura Peth (named after Vyankataram Ghorpade, who had married Bajirao's sister Anubai), Chimanpura (named after Chimanaji Damoder Moghe), Rajapure (name of Shahu's daughter), Kesarkar Peth (he was Shahu's

Sardar in Mughal camp) etc.. Shahu supplied good drinking water brought through the pipe-line from the Mahardara and Yavteshwar hills.[52] There was a mint established by Shahu in the city. It was entrusted to a well known banking firm headed by Tanshet Bhurke. Thus the city we see today was erected by Raja Shahu.

Rajwade says -

> *One peculiar trait of Shahu's character was that he felt the highest pleasure in making others happy, not only his dependents and subjects, but even aliens in race, religion and rule. Himself living in plain frugal ascetic's life, he felt highly rejoiced in seeing people enjoying their various trades and avocations. Indeed he could be called saint in this respect. Even when faced with murderers that came to attack him, he let them go unpunished and thus created a genuine feeling of reverence for his personality in the minds of public.*[53]

Administration:

The home-coming of Shahu in 1707 coincided with abnormal condition in Maharashtra, administrative machinery having almost collapsed. After the fall of Satara Shahu made himself superior authority of Maratha state. He performed his coronation on 12 January, 1708 and formed a new ministry for administration.[54] The names of

his ministers are mentioned below:

1) Peshwa	Bahiro Moreshwar
2) Senapati	Dhanaji Jadhav
3) Sachiv	Naro Shankar
4) Amatya	Balkrishna Vasudev
5) Sumant	Gadadhar Mahadji
6) Mantri	Rameshwar Pandey
7) Nyayadhish	Honaji Anant
8) Panditrao	Mudgal Bhat
9) Pratinidhi	Gadadhar Pralhad.

This was his first central government, but in course of time he made many changes in the government to hold against his rivals.

Shahu gave Peshwaship to Balaji Vishvanath for the time being and made some other administrative changes. It marked the beginning of the transfer of power from the Chhatrapati's to the Peshwa's hands. Ambaji Pant Purandare was appointed the Peshwa's Mutalik and Ramjipant Bhanu the Phadnis. Peshwa by his ability and statesmanship succeeded in making the Peshwaship hereditary. Balaji's son Bajirao-I made the Peshwa's position superior. The Peshwa became the head of the Maratha empire when Shahu appointed Balaji Bajirao and Govindrao Chitnis as joint guardians of his successor. Peshwa made himself a supreme authority of the Maratha government. The

council of eight ministers in which the Raja's influence was supreme, had disappeared.

Decentralised Feudatory States:

Shahu's regime (1707-1749) was transitional period in the sense, the administrative system became a system of decentralised feudatory states. This transformation was the inevitable result of the selfish individualist tendencies of the time. There were the internal and external circumstances which made root for the transfer of power from monarchy to the confederacy. Rajaram used to grant only formal sanad and every successful leader used to conquer the territory. He had conquered and retained the Mughal territory against the Mughal opposition as his own Jagir. The King did not grant them land but the territory.

When Shahu returned to Maharashtra some of the Sardars - Sawant of Wadi, Kanhoji Angre, Damaji Thorat, Udaji Chavan, Krishnaji Khatavkar - were involved in taking advantage of Shahul's difficulties. They were activated by selfish motives and wanted to get as much independent authority in their territory as was possible. Shahu lacked the commanding talents and energy of his grandfather and the patriotic tradition could not help him long. When he was finally seated on the throne, he granted fresh Jagirs to those who deserved them

by virtue of their service. His guiding principle in state matters was, "Don't destroy anything old, do not create anything new".

It was impossible to adhere to Shivaji's old constitution. The King's position as against the warlords who were practically independent had deteriorated. The only way to save the King's position was to win over the powerful chiefs by granting them new Jagirs or titles. His home policy was two-fold, viz., pacification of the country and conciliation of the nobles. The details of Jagirs are:

(1) Balaji Vishvanath Bhat, Peshwa.

In 1710-11 when as Senakarte he was directed to raise any army, he was given a Saranjam worth 25,000 hons a year. As Peshwa he further got sixteen Mahals and two forts as Saranjams. Besides, he drew a salary of 13,000 hons a year. After his return from Delhi he received the Sardeshmukhi of five Mahals as a further gift.

(2) The Pratinidhi Parashuram Trimbak had sixteen Mahals and thirty-five forts under him in 1715-16 besides his salary of 15,000 hons a year.

(3) Sachiv Naro Shankar had a Mahal as Saranjam, forts and watan for Sahotra, besides an annual salary of

10,000 hons.

(4) The Mantri had a Saranjam and a salary of 10,000 hons a year.

(5) Kanhoji Angre had sixteen Mahals and ten forts.[55]

Besides these there were host of others like Fattehsing Bhosale, holder of Akalkot, Kanhoji Bhosale, Khanderao Dabhade and others. At any rate the fact should not be forgotten that Shahu's feudatories possessed more resources than their dues. Shahu depended upon them for his position and they always appeared more stiff-necked. The Peshwa advised Shahu to resume the grants made as the time was not favourable for the abolition of the system. So, it was essential to accept the chief as vassal with practically free reins in their territory. They were acknowledged as hereditary Jagirdars, who would bring their force, when called upon to do so. Shahu accepted the advise of the Peshwa and concluded an agreement with Kanhoji Angre, the Tarabai's adherent. Thus, a revolution in feudalizing the Maratha state began. Thus the system of Jahagir which was brought into existence was the first cause of weakness of monarchy under Shahu.

The position of the Monarchy was further weakened by the complicated revenue system of Balaji Vishvanath. The Maratha King got the right of collecting

the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi of six deccan Subhas.[56] On Balaji's return from Delhi the question was how to realise these taxes from widely scattered territories and how the revenue collected by the Sardars should be divided between King and the chiefs. The Sardeshmukhi was the Raja's vatan and could be alienated. From the Swarajya and Mughal Subhas the Babati or 25 per cent were to be paid to King, for the maintenance of his dignity. The remaining 75 per cent that is Mokasa, in that the King could assign the Sahotra (6 per cent) and Nadgauda (3 per cent) to whomsoever he pleased. The remaining 66 per cent of the total collection went to the Sardar himself for the establishment.[57]

According to this system the King clearly defined the activities of the feudatories. Khandesh and some part of Balaghat were reserved for the Peshwa, Senapati received Baglan and Gujarat. The Sena Saheb Subha was assigned Berar and Gondwan and all the territories to the east. The Sarlashkar was in charge of Gangathadi and the provinces of Aurangabad and districts between Nira and Warana were left to Pratinidhi.[58] In their assigned territories, the chieftains were appointed by the Peshwa. They were practically independent except for the obligation of the regular payment of their respective shares. The revenue officials of the king, the

chitanis, the Fadnis and the Potnis were appointed from the Ashtapradhan. The revenue officials of the Ashtapradhan appointed those of the other chiefs. They were not under the direct control of the king or the Peshwa.[59] In the administration, the burden of the civil and military defence of the major portion of the empire was thrown on these Saranjamdars and neither the King nor the Peshwa could have control over it. The King's position became weak because of this system. Chhatrapati was made a dependent upon the feudatories for the maintenance of his royal household and the establishment which made the Chhatrapati a weak factor who could not coerce the feudatories on any account.

Shahu accepted the policy of Peshwa of expansion of Maratha power. Peshwa took advantage of Shahu's unreserved faith in him and determined to make Poona the seat of his power and began building up of his castle there. Other chiefs copied from the Peshwa. The Pratinidhi established his power at Karhad, the Sachiv at Bhor, the Senapati at Talegaon, the Bhosale at Nagpur. Each of them regarded himself independent of the King as the Peshwa did. Such spirit automatically led to the defiance of the royal authority of the King. The chief regarded the royal authority with indifference, the symbol of unity, the King existed in name only. The Peshwa could never wield absolute sway for

he could never fill the position of the King in the eyes of the people. Therefore, there was no substitute for the symbol of unity, i.e., the central authority.

Peshwa Nanasaheb was in no better position. In this period the system of Maratha conquest added to the financial difficulties. The Maratha chiefs would invade a part of the country out of their own interest and make it their property. But in the Shahu's regime the prestige of the King as the head of the state was yet great and hence the usurption of his authority by the Maratha confederacy could not become a reality in his life time.

Peshwa had made the arrangement of Maratha Confederacy. But both Peshwa Bajirao and Balaji Bajirao intended to hold the members of the confederacy in their subordinate position. Peshwa succeeded in making his position of seniority and command in the Raj Mandal. The position could be better described as a game of power politics.

Military System:

The military chief, the Senapati, still continued to be the commander-in-chief. Shahu appointed Chandrasen Jadhav to the office of Senapati after his father's death. When Chandrasen joined the Nizam the office

was conferred on Khanderao Dabhade. His son Trimbakrao, a military officer of repute was defeated and killed by Bajirao at Dabhai. Afterwards the Senapati hardly played any role worth the name. Peshwa simply legitimised an accomplished fact by granting Gujarat to the Gaikwad with the office of Sena Khas Khel.

In rank the Sarlashkar, the Sena-Saheb-Subha and the Sena-Khas-Khel were below the Senapati. The office of Sarlashkar was older than the other two. Sena-Khas-Khel was originally conferred on a junior member of Senapati family. Sena-Dhurandhar and Sena Bahaddur served to console the junior members of Bhosale family. The oldest branch alone was entitled to the higher office of Sena-Saheb-Subha. These offices were attached a Jagir in return for which the holder was expected to maintain a stipulated force. But these honours were confined only to the older families who had risen to prominence under Shahu.

This system did not work well and led to conflict. The Saranjamdars were not favourably disposed towards the Peshwa. The Peshwa did not look upon the old chiefs who held their fields directly from the King. The Saranjams which were created by the Peshwa varied in importance. The Saranjam-holders had two-fold duties to perform, the civil administration and the military command. Whenever a Saranjamdar was called upon to lead in an

expedition, he mobilised his army. He could enlist new recruits if necessary and took the field as early as possible. They were granted with twentytwo thousand Swars or horsemen.

The Saranjamdars obtained a village for the residents of his family. They were allowed to muster a stipulated quota. They had to deduct from the revenue the sum due for the civil staff and cavalry force. In practice, however, they did not maintain the stipulated force and did not pay their men according to the scale laid down by the Peshwa.[60]

The Peshwa did not advance the funds. The Saranjam holders had generally to raise it as best as they could. The clerical work of the army under him was done by a number of Darakdars appointed by the Peshwa. But they were paid out of the Jagir of the Saranjamdars. A cavalry regiment was generally served by a number of attendants. The Saranjamdar Ranoji Bhosale had no less than 5 Karkuns, and 181 attendants, though its fighting strength was 700. Out of these 700 only 90 were Bargirs of the Khasa Paga or men equipped by the state; fortyfour of these Bargirs were musketeers and the rest spearsmen. The remaining 610 seem to be of the ordinary Shiledar-type. These men were to be paid Rs. 2 per head per weak.[61] Peshwa granted Saranjams,

but took care to place rival chiefs in the same area and to take some use of their mutual jealousy.

The cavalry in Shahu's period was under the control of Peshwa, because Peshwa made himself military commander. So, the cavalry consisted of four classes: (1) The Khasgi Paga, (2) The Shiledars, (3) The Ekas or Ekandas, (4) The Pendhari. The Khasgi Paga or the Peshwa's private cavalry were by far the best. They formed a choke body armed and equipped and were paid directly bythe state. The composition of this personal force was naturally affected bythe charge of political ideal and political outlook. For this the Peshwas had their own method of classifying horses as first class, second class, and third class during Balaji Bajirao's period. A horse worth Rs. 400 was classed as superior. The Shiledar retained an advance called Nalabandi for preliminary expenses. The third class of horsemen employed by the Peshwa were single volunteers known as Ekas or Ekands. In Shahu's period such classes were not formed. These troops were generally armed with muskets and matchlocks, swords and arrows. Thus cavalry was completely dependent on Saranjamdars and the Peshwa. Besides cavalry they used war elephants. They were taught and trained for war, when they were intrepid and not afraid of noise. Shahu and his principal officers were mounted on stately elephants and marched slowly

with pomp to Miraj.

"This military custom prevailed also during the Mughal period". Along with armies marched privileged and recognised thieves called Bedar. These were the first to invade the enemy's territory. They plundered everything they found. The most precious items were reserved for the general and the rest they retained for themselves.[62] In the regime of Shahu fort administration became worse because of the revival of feudalism. The chief officer of the state became the custodian of the fort. Balaji Vishvanath, Shahu's Peshwa pursued the same practice when he obtained from the Sachiv Sankaraji Narayan the fort of Purandar. In 1710-11 Parashuram Pratinidhi was in charge of no less than thirty-five forts. The Peshwa not only encouraged but sometimes compelled the garrison to bring their families into the fort. Shahu had compelled Shaikh Mira to betray his trust by putting under arrest his wife and children. All the important forts were furnished with some pieces of artillery, the nevy guns were cleaned once a year and the smaller pieces more frequently.[63]

In Shahu's period the three old officers under Peshwa were not only retained in their position but they had all become Darakhdars or hereditary officers. The pay of a Havaldar, or Sabnis, or Kulkarni would,

naturally vary according to the importance of his charge. When he lived in the fort with his family, he got an additional allowance. These officers had lost under the new system much of their old importance. The expenses of a fort were paid out of the revenue of a number of villages attached to it. All the forts in a province were placed directly under the authority of the provincial government. Shahu did not make any powerful arrangement to maintain the forts like his grandfather.

Administration of Justice:

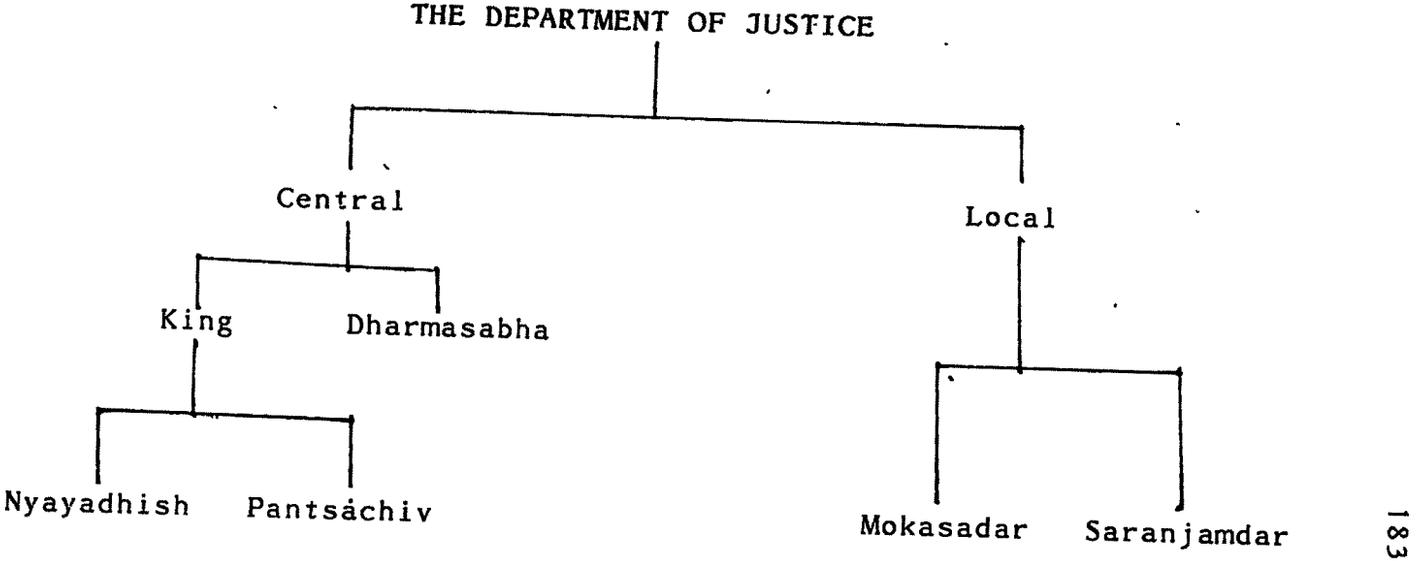
Shahu did not realise the true significance of the policy laid down by his grand-father. He continued the practice of granting land for state service in Mokasa and Jagir.[64] Shahu's Rajmandal which was constituted of feudal lords formed the central government. The Jahagirdars were also responsible for the local administration and jurisdiction. They appointed their own subhedars and administered with their help.

The members of Rajmandal - Sardars of Shahu and Raja Shahu - were the highest judicial authority in the state. In his empire the disputes were brought from the territories of different sardars. He used to try them with the help of his ministers. Rajmandal constituted the Dharmasabha and some times the King convened the meeting of judicial assembly, the Dharma-

sabha and referred to it suits of high importance.[65] The Rajmandal and the old Sardars of Shahu used Mutaliqui Shiqaua for administrative and judicial purposes. The members of the Rajmandal administered justice within the territory under their jurisdiction. Generally they gave justice through the Majalis of Diwan and Gota and sometimes with the help of Panchayat.[66]

In the local administration of justice the most important function of the village council was the Gota. They had jurisdiction over civil cases only. They were free to approach a higher court whenever they chose to. The Gota signified a body of indigenous vatandar officers, like Patil, Deshmukh, Deshpande and the land holders. As for the system of dispensing justice, suits were decided by the Diwan with the help of Gota and the corresponding fiscal division through a Majalis (assembly).[67]

The capital punishment was not inflicted even for murder during the administration of Shahu. Murder and treason were punished with fine, confiscation of property and imprisonment.[68] Punishment was to be awarded as a corrective action and not to revenge the offender. This system continued till the end of Shahu.



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Revenue Administration:

In Shahu's period revenue system was arranged by Sanad which was granted by the Emperor. The most important source of revenue was the land revenue. The lands were divided into Sheri (cultivated field), Kurans (grass land), Baag (Garden). The lands were under the direct command of the district officer, who was appointed by the Peshwa. The Patil was responsible for revenue collection. The Chauth and Sardeshmukhi were divided between King and the Saranjamdars. The whole of the Chauth was reserved for government treasury. The Babati or 25 per cent of the Chauth was collected for the Raja and his principal officer - the Pratinidhi, the Peshwa and the Pant-sachiv. Six per cent of the Chauth called Sahotra, was reserved for Pantsachiv. The Nadgauda was granted three per cent of the Chauth to different persons at different times according to the pleasure of the King. As a result of this complex division and arrangement, different individuals might have different claims over the same village.

For the revenue purpose land was classified into three stages: (1) Superior, (2) Ordinary, (3) Inferior. The condition of irrigation and the nature of the crops had been taken into consideration at the time of fixing the land tax. Balaji Bajirao in 1740-41

was granted in 1740-41 the village of Kathapur in Samat Koregaon of Prant Wai, fixing the rate as follows:[69]

Class of Land	Maunds	Payali Per Bigha
Superior	$3\frac{1}{4}$	1
Ordinary	$2\frac{1}{2}$	2
Inferior	$1\frac{3}{4}$	1

There was difference in the rate of assessment for black and rocky soil. Besides land revenue, every man was to be taxed in proportion to his resources. Shahu followed the traditional Hindu method for improving agriculture. The Tagai served two purposes. It supplied the Rayats with necessary capital at a time of scarcity and famine. The tagai was advanced in both cash and kind. In addition to these taxes many other taxes were collected from the rayats, such as Inam Tijee, Watan-patti, Gharpatti, Kotwalee or Town duty, Forest, Zakat, Excise, etc.. Government servant was completely exempted from Zakat. The whole revenue administration in Shahu period was conducted by Peshwa.

Shahu's regime gave real Swarajya to all people. In the wake of military conquest, Maratha life expanded in various directions. The Deccan itself received enrich-ment and influence by contact with the north.

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CHAPTER FIVE

RAMRAJA - 1750 TO 1777

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Ramraja was crowned King and this fact put an end to all intrigues about Shahu's succession. Tarabai gave out the story of her grandson Ramraja[1] that when her son Shivaji died,[2] his wife Bhawanibai was enceinate and gave birth to a son, three months after the death of her husband at Panhala. She concealed the child at Bawada fearing Sambhaji's jealousy. The child was looked after by a Rajput named Ghasiram.[3] The child was under the care of Bhagwantrao Ramchandra, a partisan of Tarabai.

Tarabai further gave out that it was declared that the child had died and sent the child down the fort in the custody of the Rajput couple, but actually it was carried to Bawada and there it was brought up in secrecy under the case of Durgabai,[4] the wife of Bhagawantrao's younger brother Shivram. When the secret leaked out, the prince was consequently removed to an unknown place below Ghats and was looked after there by the same Rajput couple. After this for the purpose of safety and better care the prince was finally removed to his sister Darya Bai Nimbalkar at Pangaon, six miles south of Barsi. Tarabai revealed that Bhagawantrao Ramchandra was one of the persons, who was privy to

the secret. Shahu called him and asked to vouchsafe the truth and decided to adopt the child.

This story narrated by Tarabai did not remain without mystery about the birth and bringing up of Ramraja. There is no contemporary record about birth date of Ramraja which may be due to the prevailing political situation. Ramraja himself told about his birth that he was born when his father was under custody at Panhala.[5] He was about 23 years old at the time of his succession to the throne and his father died in 1726. Thus the fact of the genuineness of the descent of Ramraja remains hanging between these statements.

Ramraja's Accession:

Tarabai and Bhagawantrao both stood to gain power and prestige by Ramraja becoming the Chhatrapati. Tarabai had not seen him since he was two years old. Bhagawantrao had not seen Ramraja since he was five years old. The Peshwa also did not know him. Even Shahu had not seen him. He came to the throne at the age of twentythree. He had lived a life devoid of any education and other training so necessary for the prince. Nanasaheb had taken it upon himself to bring Ramraja out from obscurity and set him up as Satara Chhatrapati as per the wish of Shahu.

After the cremation rites of Shahu were over, Bapuji Khanderao Chitnis left for Pangaon with a considerable force and regal paraphernalia to fetch Ramraja from there. The prince was delivered to the party which started back for Satara along with the Prince and his sister Daryabai Nimbalkar.[6] They arrived at Vaduth on the Krishna river on 20 December 1749. He called on Tarabai the same afternoon in the temple of Shakuntaleshwar. The next day Peshwa along with the Sardars and officials called on Ramraja and made his obeisance to him by offering nazars. Public opinion was still suspicious about the genuineness of Ramraja. The Peshwa and his colleagues insisted that Tarabai should give them further proof of her kinship with Ramraja. They were set at rest when Tarabai ate with him out of the same dish. Tarabai publicly acknowledged Ramraja as her grandson.

Preparation had already been made for the reception of Ramraja. All prominent Maratha leaders with the sole exception of Senapati Yashawantrao Dabhade, and Raghuji Bhosale had already arrived at Satara. Sadashivrao Bhau had also come to Satara on December 26, 1749 and met Ramraja as soon as he arrived at Vaduth. Ramraja had waited to his official entry into the metropolis and for his coronation. The royal procession

entered the city of Shahunagar amidst scenes of gay on January 4, 1750.[7] Ramraja ascended the throne the same evening in the presence of all the Maratha nobles and high state dignitaries.

After the coronation some changes were made in the Raj-mandal. Jagjivan Pratinidhi was in the confinement. Bhawanrao[8] son of Krishnaji Pant of Vishalgad was brought to Satara and made Pratinidhi by Tarabai. The post of Amatya was given to Bhagwantrao Ramchandra in recognition of his service rendered in connection with secret bringing up of Ramraja.[9] Besides these two changes no other change was made in the Raj-mandal. Chimanaji Narayat - Mantri, Ghanshyam Narayan - Sumant, Mahipatrao Anandrao - Nyayadhish, Raghunath Mudgal - Panditrao were present at the coronation ceremony. Four days after his coronation Ramraja married two girls, Tukabai Shirke and Sagunabai Mohite, daughter of Burhanji Mohite. Thus Peshwa obediently carried into effect the last wishes of Shahu and made a mention about it in his letter dated January 4, 1750.

Ramraja as Chhatrapati:

Tarabai did not allow Ramraja to go in his own way. She severely controlled Ramraja's actions, stopped him associating with the Peshwa. But the Peshwa now was more powerful than even before. He stayed at Satara

Satara even after the coronation, keeping close watch on Ramraja.

The Peshwa watched the situation quietly and soon made up his mind to transfer all the administration to Poona, leaving the Chhatrapati and his grandmother at Satara free to do what they liked. Chimanaji Narayan Sachiv and the Pratinidhi's Mutalik Yamaji Shivdeo were the Tarabai's chief supporters and obstructed any move on the part of the Peshwa. The Peshwa stayed at Satara from 26 December 1749 to 18 April 1750. Studying the situation at Satara the Peshwa invited Raghuji Bhosale to Satara to help the Chhatrapati and left Satara for Poona.

As soon as Peshwa left Satara, Tarabai used her influence with Raghuji Bhosale, but he too, refused to oblige her.[10] Tarabai wanted Ramraja to free himself from the dependence of the Peshwa and rule the kingdom according to her advice. Thus, in impasse arose in the Chhatrapati's affairs at Satara. Ramraja left harassed and decided to do away with both. When Tarabai found that Ramraja was not amenable to her control, she began to denounce Ramraja as an imposter and not a true son of her son Shivaji. This placed Ramraja in a very awkward position and also brought about a social crisis at Satara.

Tarabai left Satara for the death anniversary of her husband Rajaram at Sinhagad in March 1750. In fact, her purpose of attending the death anniversary was to prepare the further plan in consultation with Chimanaji Narayan Sachiv and other opponents of the Peshwa.[11] The departure of both Tarabai and Peshwa gave an opportunity to Ramraja to assert his independence as Chhatrapati. Firstly he was annoyed with Peshwa for leaving Satara without permission.[12] When the Pratinidhi left without formal leave Ramraja appointed a Chowki of 150 men at his house. It was very doubtful that Ramraja could possibly succeed against Peshwa.

Secondly, Ramraja with the prominent Maratha Sardars like Raghuji Bhosale, had paid visit to Raghuji Bhosale with money grants and robes of honour on him.[13] But Raghuji was a very old bird. He had decided to befriend the Peshwa, knowing that both Ramraja and Tarabai were after all broken reads. He declined Ramraja's offer and advised Ramraja that he should not antagonize the Peshwa. After that he had tried to win over other Sardars but even there also he did not have any response. As a last resort he tried to recruit an army[14] and to carry on the administration on his own responsibility. But how could he do so with empty hands? He was hardly able to meet the expense of his court. The salary of

his personal staff was often in arrears, and he had also contracted debts. He pressed some nobles of his court to lend him money.[15] He attempted to plunder the property of illegitimate daughter of the late king Shahu. Nana Purandare wrote to the Peshwa for funds every now and then. But Ramraja and his sister were far from a match for either Tarabai or Peshwa.

Ramraja made an attempt to draw to his side, all opponents of the Peshwa. Govindrao was unhappy with him and so was Nana Purandare who had exhausted all means for securing the Chhatrapati's favour.[16] He had regularly written to the Peshwa about the attitude of Ramraja and implored him to send more troops to maintain law and order.[17] Ramraja thought of marching upon Poona with Daryabai to put an end to the power of Peshwa.[18] He made friendship with Yamaji and encouraged him to oppose the Peshwa. He refused to allow his family to go out of the fort of Satara. He severely beat the personal servant of Tarabai. But the intercession of Nana Purandare and Raghuji Bhosale could not save him.[19] Ramraja soon gave up all pretence and became willing tool in the Peshwa's hand.

Nana Purandare wrote to the Peshwa -

The king does not care to secure the good graces of Tarabai. He had asked the Sachiv

not to hand over to you the fort of Sinhagad. He is not sincere and fair in his dealings. He tried to upset all your measures and looks upon your friends as his enemies.[20]

In another report he wrote -

The king asked Yashwantrao Potnis to end the deadlock and pay off the salaries of servants, if you can do at once, otherwise I could make my own arrangements. I am not afraid of anybody. I want to see what these Brahmins can do ... I do not owe him a farthing. I won't give him a single foot. I would rather go and make friends with Yamaji Pant. He is a good Brahmin. Govindrao Chitnis has crossed me very much. I will dispose him and give his office to another man.[21]

Peshwa watched the situation from Poona, but when the things came to a head in the month of June, 1750, he had suggested Purandare about the removal of Daryabai from Satara and granted Watan and Saranjam of Sarlashkar to her husband.[22] Tarabai could in no case be as intelligent as the Peshwa was. She was not slow to act and spare any efforts to throw Ramraja overboard. At the very time Sambhaji of Kolhapur wrote a letter to Tarabai, to press his claim upon Satara throne. But Tarabai still had not given up the idea of making Ramraja a tool in her hands. The exchange of letters

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between Tarabai and Sambhaji alarmed Peshwa. Govindrao Moreshwar wrote to the Peshwa about Tarabai's plan for the removal of Ramraja from the power.[23] But Tarabai had no serious intention of backing Sambhaji's claim. In that critical position the weak Ramraja could not hold out for long, want of funds soon brought him to his knees. Raghuji and other partisans of Peshwa advised Ramraja to make up his difference with Balaji Bajirao.

Poona Conference of 1750:

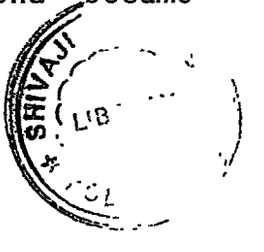
When Peshwa left Satara for Poona, he had a double purpose - the thread ceremony of his son Vishvas-rao and marriage ceremony of Sadashiv who had recently lost his first wife. Invitations had been sent to all Maratha nobles, to the king and to Tarabai. The Peshwa then made a pressing request to Tarabai to visit Poona. Ramraja with that invitation left for Poona in August 1750, alongwith Raghuji Bhosale. Sarlashkar Somavanshi was there, as also Sindia and Holkar from the north. The aim of Balaji Bajirao in assembling all those counted in the politics of Maharashtra was to discuss with them the critical political situation.

In the Poona conference, which was indeed unique in Maratha history, both in weight and variety of views, Sadashivrao Bhau, Ramchandra Bawa, Mahadoba Purandare, Sakharam Bapu, then a rising diplomat of the Peshwa's

party had assembled. Tarabai came down from the fort of Sinhagad and halted at Shivapur. Peshwa's brother Raghunathrao went to Shivapur to escort her to Poona. She was lodged in the house of Bapuji Naik and the Peshwa made nazar of five thousand rupees. Ramraja was accorded a grand reception by the Peshwa and was lodged in the seven-storied mansion of Ramchandra Bawa.[24]

Ins the Poona Conference Peshwa Balaji Bajirao made up his mind to make some changes in the administration set up of the growing state. The Peshwa tried his best to come to a kind of a working compromise, so that the administration should run smoothly and rapid expansion of the Maratha power, should also be possible. The most prominent Maratha nobles sat together for days and weeks and had heart to heart talks. The Peshwa took the final resolution and king had passed the orders.[25] The decisions arrived at were as follows:

(1) The political atmosphere of Satara had become too uneasy for the administration. So, the official work and administration of the state be concentrated at Poona under the direct supervision of Peshwa. Chhatrapati and Tarabai should have their residence at Satara. Thus, Poona became the de facto capital of Marathas.



(2) The Peshwa should have final and last authority of the administration. The Pratinidhi, the Sachiv and the Senapati were the only members of Ashta-pradhan and have some administrative functions. Other members of the Ashtapradhan are outdated body now and would not make any interference in the administration.

(3) Each Maratha noble was to enjoy an exclusive independent sphere of influence for the system of checks and balances and mutual interdependence. This was introduced by Balaji Vishvanath but he had failed inasmuch as it had led to quarrels among the Maratha Sardars acting in the same region. So, Balaji Bajirao Peshwa made changes in the policy.

Thus, the Poona conference which took place with some intention, gave administrative set-back to the Chhatrapati. Chhatrapati tried to win over to his side all Maratha nobles, but failed due to political situation. Chhatrapati became nominal head of the Maratha administration - only a signing authority. After this the Raja did not know the administration much and he lived at Satara helplessly. The Peshwa made himself the last and the highest authority of the Maratha State.

Sangola Agreement, 1750:

In Poona Conference, Maratha nobles took only decisions, which were not implemented. At Poona Tarabai did not agree and attempted to oppose Peshwa. She tried to win over her side Ramraja but he was unable to follow her. The Peshwa Balaji Bajirao wanted to make both Poona and Satara safe against the intrigues of Tarabai. Peshwa had seen that strong fort Sinhagad belonged to Sachiv and afforded a chance for intriguing against him. So, he categorically demanded possession of that fort from Sachiv. In order to make Poona safe, Balaji Bajirao had approached the Chhatrapati to transfer that fort to him in lieu of other territory which he was willing to give in exchange to the Sachiv. The king had hesitated and had passed orders to the contrary.[26] For the final settlement of this question the Sachiv was brought to Poona with Tarabai and was asked to abide himself by the King's order. Sachiv, on showing some reluctance, had been put into prison on 14 June, 1750. Jiwaji Ganesh Khasgiwale had been sent with commanded force to Sinhagad to take possession on 6 July 1750. The fort was surrendered and Sachiv had been liberated. He had paid the penalty for joining the cause of Tarabai.

Like the Sachiv, the Pratinidhi, too, was known to be a partisan of Tarabai. Personally Dadoba Pratinidhi

possessed little capacity, but his Mutalik Yamaji Shivdev was clever and intriguing. Dadoba owned the important territory between Karhad and Pandharpur bordering on the east of Satara. His domain could serve as a base for intrigue against the Peshwa at the court of Chhatrapati. Peshwa wanted to make the Pratinidhi innocuous for any further mischief and demanded from him the small fortified outpost of Sangola not very far from Pandharpur. Yamaji Shivdev left Sangola on the pretence of delivering the fort, but as soon as he had reached the place he realised the standard of revolt. This created problem for Peshwa, because the Pratinidhi was constitutionally his superior. Although in practice he had become a non-entity in politics for a long time, his case could be dealt with only by the Chhatrapati and not by Peshwa.

After the conclusion of Poona conference, Peshwa despatched Sadashivrao Bhau and Ramchandra Bawa with an adequate armed force. The Ramraja was also requested to proceed to Sangola for taking possession of Sangola from Yamaji Shivdev. Yamaji Shivdev's opposition lasted only for two weeks in the face of Bawa's artillery and Sangola surrendered to the Peshwa's force on September 25, 1750. Ramraja himself ordered ammunitions for the bombardment of the fort of Sangola.[27] Yamaji Shivdev and Dadoba Pratinidhi were specially brought to Sangola

from Purandar to confirm the surrender.

At Sangola the new administrative changes of the Maratha state were announced by Ramraja. They were as follows:

(1) Out of nine ministers including Pratinidhi in the central government four had already fallen into the background. Only three, the Pratinidhi, the Sachiv and Sénapati were active rivals of the Peshwa. The opposition of the Sachiv had been ended at Poona. The sulking Dadoba Pratinidhi and his hostile deputy, Yamaji Shivdev were dismissed by the Chhatrapati from their office. These were given to two partisans of the Peshwa Bhavanrao and Vasudev Anant, a nephew of Yamaji Shivdev.

(2) The Senapati Yashwantrao Dabhade had proved incompetent on account of his incurable vices. So, he was given a cash allowance for maintenance and Subha of Gujarat was divided equally between the Gaikwad and the Peshwa.[28] Trimbakrao was appointed as Senapati. Besides that Mantri Ghansham Narayan, Sumant Vithal Anandrao, Nyayadhish Khanderao Kashi, Panditrao Dhondopant Upadhye were confirmed as before.[29] But this was of slightlesser importance.

(3) Daryabai, the sister of Chhatrapati, had been moving heaven and earth to have her reward for helping Ramraja. Her husband Bhimaji Naik Nimbalkar was formally appointed to the office of Sarlashkar. Babaji Naik's pretensions in the Karnatak were finally rejected and the province was assigned to the Peshwa.[30]

(4) Ramraja's position at Satara was also defined. Appointments were made for the personal staff of the Chhatrapati at Satara, Govindrao Chitnis was made the Maharaja's principal manager, with his nephew Bapuji Khanderao as the military captain and was assigned the Pratinidhi's provinces. Trimbakrao Sadashiv alias Nana Purandare was the Peshwa's representative helping him in keeping order. Yeshwantrao Potnis and Devrao Lapate were to be the Chhatrapati's personal companions and advisers. The expenses of the court of Satara were to be borne by the individual Sardar in fixed proportions as used to be done formerly.[31] Trimbak Hari Patwardhan, one of the Peshwa's trusted dependents was appointed as the principal manager of Fatehsinh Bhosale at Akkalkot.

(5) In Konkan, provinces were divided between Tulaji

Angre, Sarkhel, Rajadnya Bhavanishankar, Vijaratmab Manaji Angre the military officers who were appointed for Wai, Satara, Javali, Indapur, etc.[32]

The Sangola Agreement was a turning point in the history of the Marathas. These changes brought about silent but significant revolution in the constitution of the Maratha state. Under the system the Peshwa was to be supreme authority in the administration, and his de facto capital was Poona. Peshwa brought about this revolution with the help of Ramraja. In the constitution the Chhatrapati was not to rule but to reign at the old capital of Satara. Chhatrapati's position became worse and he had acted only nominally as head and the Peshwa became active rival for power. Ramraja was now unable to take any decision. The scheme was conceived by Ramchandra Bawa and was executed by Sadashivrao's arms. A complete revolution was thus silently effected transferring all power from the Chhatrapati to the Peshwa. Within nine months of Shahu's death the Chhatrapati became a creature in the Peshwa's hands.

Ramraja Imprisoned:

The constitutional revolution of evolved a fresh order of things under the sanction of Chhatrapati.

This willing co-operation and complete accord with the Peshwa's policy on the part of Ramraja was highly resented by Tarabai. Tarabai had been watching with resentment the doings of her opponents and cursing Ramraja for being a puppet in their hands. But she did not openly disapprove of what had been done at Poona and at Sangola. So Tarabai decided to keep Ramraja under her control, because after all the fountainhead of power was the Chhatrapati.

Tarabai left Poona in the middle of October 1750, and after visiting Shambhu Mahadev, reached Satara on 29 October 1750. She had organized her own party and an armed force during the interval. From Poona she wrote to Shaikh Mira the guardian of fort Satara to store ample supplies and prepare for its defence.[33] On arrival she compelled all officers and guards of the fort to swear allegiance and obedience to her personally. Some were won over by money and some by other inducement. She carried the two queens of Ramraja and his valuables from the palace below up into the fort. And she entrenched herself for a final trial of strength with the Peshwa. Her strategy was to capture the person of Ramraja and then to challenge the Peshwa in the name of the Chhatrapati. Ramraja, the unsuspected victim was already on his way to his doom at Satara.

Ramraja left Sangola early in November 1750 and after paying a visit to Shambhu Mahadev reached his capital Shahunagar on 17 November 1750. The Peshwa and Sadashivrao Bhau had fully tutored him to assert his independence and to control the activities of his grandmother.[34] But Ramraja had much weaker nerves than Bhau's and straight way walked into the snare laid for him by his ambitious grandmother. He first sent messangers to her for reconciliation and implored her to come down from the fort. But when success did not seem to come nearer through this indirect contact he himself went up to the fort to make a personal effort.[35]

In the very first meeting Tarabai reprimanded him for what he had done at Poona and at Sangola. She asked him to dissociate himself completely from the Peshwa. She advised him to act according to her advice and to rule the kingdom with the help of the Pratinidhi and her other partisans. Ramraja had already weighed in his mind and had come to the conclusion that it was safer to befriend the Peshwa. It was almost impossible to uproot the Peshwa who had held all the strings of power. It was also not possible to run the administration without him. Ramraja had refused to accept her advice and returned to his palace down the fort of the hill.

Ramraja maintained his status quo. Tarabai, helpless as she was, decided to punish Ramraja before she would come to a reckoning with the Peshwa. This opportunity fell on Champa Shashti, 22 November 1750, dedicated to the worship of the family of the Bhosale clan. Tarabai sent messengers inviting Ramraja for the worship. The officers of his personal staff who had an inkling of the stormy meeting of a day before, had become suspicious. They advised Ramraja not to risk a visit but the king quietly slipped out of his palace and joined his grandmother in the worship. On 22 November 1750, when the ceremony was over the Ramraja with his two queens was to go down to the city, the gate was shut in his face. The gatekeepers had received previous intimation to put him under arrest. The prisoner could not be freed without a regular siege and bombardment by artillery. If Ramraja had pressed his authority and power as Chhatrapati after all gatekeepers were his own servants and he might have even ordered the arrest of Tarabai. But Ramraja who was helpless and weak surrendered himself and his family.[36] Bapuji Chitnis and others on learning this development tried their best to release him.

Ramraja's Captivity:

The fort of Satara being strongly defended, Ramraja

was strongly guarded by two of Tarabai's staunch adherents, Naroo Kaka and Sambhaji Tatya. They kept a vigilant watch on him and did not allow him to communicate with the outside world.[37] And Ramraja continued to be a close prisoner in the utmost misery till tarabai's death in 1761. After Ramraja's confinement the Peshwa found all his plans upset but he kept his patience for which he had enough resources. He wrote Nana Purandare,

> *I have not the least desire to stand in opposition to the lady sovereign, our master and protector. You must solicit her pleasure and impress it on her, how our enemies would take advantage. You must also find out whether the confinement of the Chhatrapati is a mere show or harmful to him and how far the two are likely to collúde against us.*

Nana Purandare replied -

> *Ramraja is being strictly guarded by Tarabai's men. He sends me piteous appeals to get him released*

The Peshwa adopted a softer attitude and informed,

> *If she persists in keeping the king a close prisoner and conduct the administration herself, the whole Maratha raj suffers disgrace in public. How is it possible for Her Highness to supervise from her sung perch on the fort pólitical operations ranging over a wide*

> *area? It is not possible for me at once to relegate her to her former confinement, but I refrain from such a drastic measure. We are the Chhatrapati's servants. So, please assure the king of our extreme concern for his welfare. Tell him to submit to Her Highness' wishes for a time. You must quietly manage to win over the king completely to our view.*[39]

Peshwa ordered that since Ramraja was a strictly guarded prisoner all his belongings[6], jewellery, plate and other valuables were in the palace below, and those should be kept carefully.[40] Accordingly, these were listed and kept secure at Purandar with a view both that Tarabai should not appropriate them and also to restore them to king when time came.

Tarabai had secured the person of Ramraja and began issuing commands in his name. She took active steps to take the reigns of administration into her own hands with the help of Dadoba Pratinidhi and his deputy Yamaji Shivdev. While the Peshwa and his handfulls were in Karnataka because of Nasirjang's invasion, Tarabai moved heaven and earth to undermine the Peshwa's position. The Peshwa's agent Trimbak Sadashiv alias Nana Purandare kept his master fully informed of the situation developed at Satara. He proposed certain alternative measures,[41] such as using force against

Tarabai so as to reduce her submission or leaving her along and conducting the administration as best as possible. He advised Peshwa to bring Sambhaji from Kolhapur as counter-blast to the power both of Tarabai and Ramraja.

Peshwa Nanasaheb had been wielding almost dictorial power and he was not prepared to risk these solutions. Ramraja was a mere boy immature, but Sambhaji was a man who had been ruler and was ably guided by his wife Jijabai. He had to make polite submissions to persuade Tarabai to come down from the fort and consent to meeting. The Peshwa patiently waited for a better turn of events and took no stern measures.

Tarabai was not the woman to submit either to threats or hostilities. The opinion of the Maratha nation unanimously condemned Tarabai's high-handed action of confinement. Every effort made to get Ramraja released stiffened the old lady in her attitude. She had made adequate arrangement for the defence of the fort by recruiting some Mavle fighters.[42] She asked Manaji Angre to send some ammunitions which he, however, refused. The guns of the fort sometimes bombed the town below. The other persons who had incurred her wrath alongwith Ramraja were Daryabai Nimbalkar, Govindrao Chitnis and Nana Purandare. She made an attempt to capture

them but she did not succeed. Peshwa was very anxious to know about Satara affairs and made new recruitment of Sardars and Mavle.[43]

This critical situation and his miserable condition made Ramraja anxious for the safety of his sister. He advised her to leave Satara forthwith. She, therefore, left for Pangaon in January 1751. Ramraja's plight was most miserable all the while. Completely fed up with politics he sent message to the Peshwa that he was prepared to surrender all authority to him in return for a pension.[44] Tarabai first tried repeatedly to make Ramraja look her way but when she found him obdurate, her hatred towards Ramraja grew so violent. She began to use cruel and filthy language towards him in angry moments. She at every moment declared that the Raja was no son of her son Shivaji and that he was an imposter.[45] He does not even belong to Bhosale clan. This was felt by him as the most cutting stroke. Because she alone was the author of his fate in having brought him out of oblivion. To this Burhanji Mohite, father-in-law of Ramraja became furious and threatened to go to extremities if she did not release and give power to Ramraja.[46] This open repudiation of Ramraja by Tarabai also led to some unpleasant complications. At the very time parties set up an imposter to impersonate Ramraja,

but it proved false. He divulged his name, Santaji Ahirrao.[47]

The reaction in the capital and in the kingdom to the shattering annourcement had been vividly described in Mr S.M. Garge's Karveer Riyasat -

> *Even the premier chieftains were dumbfounded and some were indignent. There were constant reports of curious happenings in Satara, such as Maratha chieftains undertaking fasts and making other demonstration of disapproval before Burhanji's house. ... The loyalty of the chieftains was disturbed, and all sorts of rumours were afoot. What will happen to the kingdom now? ... Will Ramraja be displaced? Never in the history of Satara had there been a crisis of such magnitude.*[48]

Some made an all out effort to draw to her side all those that were illdisposed towards the Peshwa. Many guards and servants were similarly put to death or made to suffer indescribable hardship. When she found Dadoba Pratinidhi was incapable of managing her affairs she promised Pratinidhi's post to Babuji Naik Joshi.

Tarabai had been making efforts to enlist Sambhaji of Kolhapur. She even thought of supporting Sambhaji's candidature for the Satara throne, she sent message

to him to come to Satara.[49] But Sambhaji knowing Tarabai's efforts to remove Ramraja from the Satara throne, did not pay attention to her. He had remembered that it was Tarabai who had been responsible for foiling his chance. At this time, Sambhaji made a starting offer to Sadashivrao to come and take over the office of the Peshwa. This was Peshwa's plan to prevent Tarabai from winning over Sambhaji to her side.[50]

Battle of Satara:

In Poona conference the Peshwa pressed Umabai Dabhade (widow of Khanderao Dabhade) to accede to his demands. She, in her extremity approached Tarabai against him. Thus, two ladies started concerted measures to put down the Peshwa. Both raised a cry that the Chhatrapati's Raj was usurped by the Peshwa. Tarabai and Umabai met in rainy season in 1751 and agreed to make final appeal to the Peshwa. These two ambitious ladies met again at the temple of Shambhu Mahadev on 15 Oct. 1751. They made a common cause and hatched plans to end the Peshwa's ascendancy with the help of Damaji Gaikwad the agent of Dabhade in Gujarat.

Thus the trio was waiting for an opportunity to take revange. The opportunity fell when Peshwa and his cousin were absent in Poona. Tarabai had the person of the Chhatrapati under her control. Damaji Gaikwad

left Gujarat with force of about fifteen thousand and marched into the Khandesh, where he was first challenged by Peshwa's officer. Tarabai increased the garrison of Satara by five thousand men and placed a strong contingent on the summit of Yeoteshwar hill and garrisoned other strong places in the neighbourhood of the fort. She also won Ramdas, the Brahman in Salabatjang's service to her side. She had offered him the office of the Peshwa. Damaji Gaikwad gained victory over Peshwa's officer and made his way to Poona. At Talegaon Yashwantrao Dabhade and Umabai joined him.[51] He seized Poona city and its people ran here and there for sefety.

After this Damaji left for Satara where Tarabai had ordered Shaikh Mira to join him with the Mavales.[52] He pitched his camp at Varye and Mhasve on the river Venya.[53] He communicated with Tarabai's garrison at Yeoteshwar. Trimbakrao Pethe and other commanders of the Peshwa made a rash attack on Damaji's force but had to fall back on Limb completely defeated. The defeat was soon revenged when the Peshwa's forces led by Balwantrao Mehandale joined Pethe. Damaji Gaikwad was defeated on March 19, 1751 and he retired for safety to Mahar Dara valley to the west of the town of Satara. After this Peshwa's army attacked Satara and at once stormed Yeoteshwar and killed the garrison. Balwantrao then drove in Tarabai's camp and captured the lost fort.

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Afterwards Damaji Gaikwad was captured and sent to Lohgad as prisoner.

Peshwa invested Satara fort and vainly pressed the old queen to release Ramraja. That unfortunate Chhatrapati's condition had grown worse with the failure of Tarabai's plan. Tarabai thought that the Peshwa could not keep her in confinement. Any attempt made by the Peshwa for the release of Ramraja or even to get news about him gave unpardonable offence to Tarabai. She got the Havildar of Satara Anandrao Jadhav and some others beheaded on the charge that they had tried to secure some information of Ramraja.[54] Afterwards Anandrao Jadhav was put to death on 16 July 1751. Her supporters kept the keepers of the fort loyal to Tarabai. Thus Peshwa saw no chance of a possible compromise. He, therefore, made another effort to reconcile Tarabai and implored her again and again to release Ramraja.[55] Tarabai vented her full spite on the wretched prince. So, fed him with the coarsest grain, insulted him daily and openly spoke of him as an imposter - a mere 'Gondhali' Ramraja's spirit never of the highest dropped under this treatment. His health suffered and mind disturbed. He soon became unfit to sit on the throne of his forefathers.

After this Peshwa sent his brother Rathunathrao to reduce Gujarat and thus ended the women's war. Even

Tarabai was not unaffected. She felt that she could not indefinitely defy the Peshwa. But having thus established a reign of terror in Satara she consented to meet Peshwa in Poona.

Tarabai found all strikes and struggles in vain and made reconciliation with Peshwa. In June 1751 she sent her agents Chinto Anant and Moro Shivdev to negotiate terms of peace with the Peshwa who first demanded the release of Ramraja. But Tarabai was not prepared to agree on any account because she wanted to use Ramraja as a pawn in her political game.

Balaji Bajirao sent Mahadji Nimbalkar, Dhondo Govind, and Dinkar Mahadev to bring Tarabai and Ramraja down from the fort. The compromise was signed in 1751.[56] One important term proposed by Tarabai and accepted by Peshwa was -

> *In government, whatever duties were assigned to you during the reign of Shahu would alone be assigned to you, and whatever duties were executed by the royal court would be carried out by the court in future. You should not take interest in the latter.*

Peshwa's reply -

> *When king Shahu died Your Majesty showed me more favours thana to other servants and gave me all the powers. You pledged your*

word. Whatever you now wish, I accept. I shall not insist.[57]

After that conciliation Tarabai came down to town below the fort on 13 October, 1751. She had chosen the mansion of Fatehsingh Bhosale for her residence. She even paid visit to Poona along with Ramraja. In order to flatter her vanity the Peshwa accorded her a right royal reception. Peshwa did not succeed in inducing her to release Ramraja. Having obtained her consent to concentrate all power in his hands the Peshwa sent Tarabai and Ramraja back to Satara. Trimbakrao Pethe[58] who was clever and tactful agent was appointed to look after their affairs. He kept the old dame in perfect good humous with a show of outward submission. But he had slowly and quietly either dismissed or won over almost all her partisans. He diplomatically liquidated Mansingh Jadhav who had acted as the prime mover in all the activities of Tarabai against Peshwa. Gift of land and money worked havoc on the shallow loyalty of Chinto Anant and Moro Shivdev Thite.[59] But he had failed to get Ramraja released.

The reconciliation between Tarabai and Peshwa was later confirmed on oath which they both took in the presence of a deity of Jejuri on 17 September 1752.[60] In this meeting Tarabai solemnly declared that Ramraja

was not the true son of his father, that his advent had brought disgrace on the Chhatrapati's house, that he should, therefore, be removed and Sambhaji of Kolhapur be placed on the throne at Satara.

"This Raja (Ramraja) is false. Everyone knows this. But he should not be killed. He should be treated as an illegitimate sone like Fatehsingh Bawa or Yesuji Kusaji. He should be supplied with the requirements of life, if necessary, he should be kept confined but not killed."[61]

Peshwa concluded this reconciliation with Tarabai. But he did not ask Tarabai to clarify whether Ramraja was or was not really her grandson. The Peshwa did not entertain the idea of bringing Sambhaji over to replace Ramraja. Tarabai kept on reminding him; he ignored it. So many prominent Maratha chieftains, Shinde, Holkar, Raghuji Bhosale and others were busy with their own affairs. They had no clear idea of the nature of the crisis at Satara. They had accepted Ramraja as their ruler and Nanasaheb as the Chief Minister. How could Nanasaheb take the responsibility to remove the ruler without their consent?[62] His sole object at the time was to keep himself free from the politics of Satara court. Because Salabatjung and Busy were on the war path. The Peshwa and his government were heavily in

debt due to the expeditions. He seems to have said that: "Whatever lies within my power, I shall do without duplicity. ... In the last two years, I have become drenched in debt. Now, I have no more enthusiasm to embroil myself in the oil-and-salt affairs of the court".

After this Ramraja, however, had a most miserable life during Tarabai's usurpation of power. He continued in confinement till her death. But Tarabai continued to take part in petty politics. She kept up a regular court in the mansion of Fatehsingh Bhosale in the town of Shahunagar. She pretended to be the real Chhatrapati and occasionally made grants, gave offices, and kept up a show of being superior in authority to the Peshwa. She gave the office of Mujumdar to Dhondo Mahadev Senakarte in June 1758.[63] Tarabai congratulated Balaji Bajirao in very warm terms when he scored a victory over the Nizam in 1751-52. The Peshwa tried to keep her in good humour by pretending to consult her about the affairs of the state and by leaving her free in her town-limited sphere.[64]

Tarabai kept her relation with her step son Sambhaji and improved much since the days of her open breach with the Peshwa. But when Sambhaji heard about Jejuri pact, his reaction seems to have been that he should march against Satara. But his wife Jijabai disuaded

him saying that the Peshwa had become too powerful to be subdued by military action, she also suggested that, he should befriend the Peshwa. A few months after this pact, the Peshwa had gone on an expedition into Karnatak. Peshwa visited Kolhapur and paid his respect to Sambhaji. Sambhaji was still angry with Nanasaheb. Sambhaji himself had given up all hopes of becoming the Chhatrapati of unified state. Peshwa Balaji Bajirao had failed to achieve unification of Kolhapur and Satara thrones. And due to the age, Sambhaji had no special capacity of managing his concern. The Peshwa also kept amicable relation with Sambhaji at last.

Sambhaji died on 18 December, 1760, without any issue of his own. This afforded the Peshwa the desired opportunity to confiscate the Kolhapur State and annex it to Satara. But in this very hour of importance the Marathas were defeated at Panipat. Balaji Bajirao died on 23 June 1761 and the question remained closed. Tarabai also died before a decision was made on 10 December 1761..

Tarabai was undoubtedly a remarkable woman in Maratha history. She was hailed at first by the Maratha nation as an incarnation of 'Bhadra Kali'. But after the release of Shahu, she became holder in her political voice, declared Shahu an imposter. Had she frankly acknowledged Shahu's claim, she would have virtually

remained as regent at Satara. The whole Maratha nation would have admired and greeted her. And the possibility of the rise of Peshwa would have been bleak. It was Tarabai who who was responsible for the break-up of the unity of the Maratha state. But she successfully kept at bay Aurangzeb and three generations of the Peshwa. Her presence kept the Peshwa alert. In her last years of life there was a cordiality between her and the Peshwa. Only Ramraja was the worst sufferer at her hands. And it was he who had to perform her last rites at Mahuli. When the matter was taken to the Peshwa Madhavrao-I, he decided to keep his hands up. Thus Balaji Bajirao's plan was upset.

Chhatrapati Restored:

After the death of Balaji Bajirao, Madhavrao proceeded to Satara and received the robes of office at the hands of the Chhatrapati, on 20 July 1762. Raghunathrao had to remain sullenly content with the position of a mere adviser. Sakharam Bapu and Baburao Phadnis were conducting the provisional administration. To this Raghunathrao directed his efforts to an internecine struggle with his nephew.

Raghunathrao began to ignore the young Peshwa and conduct every matter

of administration himself. It is at this time that Nizam, to avenge his defeat at Udgir, marched directly upon Poona at the head of powerful army. He attacked Shrigonda for obtaining hidden treasure of Shinde's palaces but failed to secure any wealth. His march towards Poona had come so suddenly that the relatives of the Peshwa, alongwith people near him, sought safety at Lohagad. The Peshwa's treasury was shifted to Purandar. Additional guards were provided for the safety of the Chhatrapati[65] and strict measures were taken to protect him. When Nizam Ali halted at Urali, he had no other alternative but to come to terms with the Peshwa. But Raghunathrao was invested with full power to deal with the Nizam. He wanted to deal with Nizam leniently for his own selfish ends.

Peshwa Madhavrao lost the opportunity to crush the Nizam due to Raghunathrao and the atmosphere at the Poona court became vitiated by mutual suspicion. The Poona Darbar was divided into two groups. The difference that had arisen at Urali between the Peshwa and Raghunathrao now came into open Raghunathrao received the wholehearted support of Sakharam Bapu, Aba Purandare, Naro Shankar, Vitthal Shivdev, Bahiro Anant, while Madhavrao was backed by the Patwardhans, Trimbakrao Pethe and Baburao Phadnis. This had resulted in fighting in Ghod. However, in the battle of Ghod Malharrao Holkar

played the role of mediator and brought about the settlement. Still the administration was under the control of Raghunathrao.

At Alegaon assemblage Raghunathrao entertained Nizam Ali at dinner and exchanged civilities. Vitthal Sundar, the Diwan of Nizam Ali, was similarly treated. In the assemblage at Alegaon the proposal to install Janoji Bhosale as Chhatrapati was renewed and discussed at the instance of Raghunathrao[66] Raghunathrao set about consolidating his power as was to be expected. He began making changes in the administration to weaken Peshwa's position. He placed strict restraint upon Madhavrao's person with a guard of 2,000 men to watch him. Trimbakrao Pethe and Baburao Phadnis were removed from their posts, Sakharam Bapu was appointed as the Chief Karbhari and was given leave to return to take charge of fort Sinhagad. Chinto Vitthal Rairikar, Raghunathrao's confidential secretary, was made Phadnis. Malharrao Holkar was given leave to return to his work at Wafegaon. Kanhoji Mohite was given the post of Sarlashkar. He appointed Nilkanth Aba Purandare as the Mutalik of the Peshwa. If Janoji had been present at Alegaon, Raghunathrao would have surely given him some position or some assignment.

After this Raghunathrao declared his intention to obtain confirmation of all these changes from the

Chhatrapati of Satara.[67] At this time Chhatrapati was living in the palace below the fort of Satara. Madhavrao had appointed Mahipatrao, the son of Trimbak Sachiv alias Nana Purandare as his chief Karbhari. This the Peshwa had done after the demise of Tarabai, on order of Ramraja with the view that Ramraja should enjoy a degree of independence and gain experience in political matters. After this Raghunathrao left for Satara for ensuring Ramraja's support. At this time Raghunathrao obtained the Chhatrapati's formal consent to all the changes he had made in Poona council.

At this time Raghunathrao also made very drastic changes in the personnel of the Chhatrapati's council at Satara. He deprived Dabhade of the hereditary post of Senapati and conferred the same on Ramchandra Jadhav. Vitthal Shivdev was appointed Nyayadhish. There was some dispute on the post of the Pratinidhi. Raghunathrao gave this post to his minor son Bhaskarrao, removing Bhawanrao[68] and fearing the minority of his son appointed Naro Shankar as his Mutalik. Yamaji Gamaji who was holding that post was disappointed and he joined Gopalrao Patwardhan.[69] Raghunathrao made drastic changes in the Chhatrapati's council also but did not think of making Janoji Bhosale the Chhatrapati. At Alegaon assemblage each of them was engaged in his own scheme. Vitthal Sundar conceived the plan of installing Janoji as

Chhatrapati, so that there would be no difficulty for Raghunathrao to obtain the robes of Peshwaship. But the actual state of affairs was quite different. Raghunathrao did not take any step to remove the Chhatrapati.[70] He only made certain changes in the Chhatrapati's council to strengthen his position. So, he had no idea of doing anything to undermine the status of Ramraja. All Maratha Sardars like Janoji Bhosale had deep respect for Chhatrapati's house. They regarded it as their sacred duty to safeguard the status and dignity of Satarkar Bhosale. After Shahu all power passed into the hands of the Peshwa but the state of affairs was carried with the formal consent and in the name of the Chhatrapati. The Chhatrapati was the symbol of the unity of the Maratha people. The Peshwa, after all, was Chhatrapati's servant.

Ramraja had just begun to breath freely. Tarabai had systematically prevented him from gaining experience required to fulfill the duties of his office. He was living as a prisoner during her life time. It was a tragic situation, but more tragic when he got the chance to breath freely and developed his personality. Raghnathrao and Madhavrao joined hands in ignoring him completely in the matter of constituting his council. By making these drastic changes, the long established

order was disturbed. Raghunathrao's action in appointing his own son Bhaskarrao to the office of the Pratinidhi was the most ill-conceived measure. It revealed his mind to render the Chhatrapati wholly impotent. In the struggle for power between uncle and nephew the Chhatrapati's office and position suffered.

Proposal of Janoji Bhosale:

After making these changes at Satara, Raghunathrao turned towards Gopalrao Patwardhan and asked him to surrender the fort of Miraj.[71] The fort was sieged. It was clear that Raghunathrao would go to any length to gain supreme power. Madhavrao could do nothing in the matter. The struggle for power between uncle and nephew must have caused distress to Janoji. He was thinking of doing his best to end it.[72] Nizam Ali found this an opportunity to hatch the fresh plot to undermine the power of the Marathas. Nizam's Diwan Vitthal Sundar and Pratinidhi deputy Sadashiv Yamaji quickly moved away from all these chiefs to different places. They met at Gulbarga in 1763 and prepared a definite plan for seizing the Peshwa's land[73] and install Janoji as Chhatrapati. Gamaji undertook to lead army against Satara, seize the person of the Chhatrapati and install Janoji in his place. Janoji and Nizam Ali together directed the operations and moved in hot haste

against the Peshwa's territory. But there is no record that Janoji entered into these negotiations to make himself Chhatrapati.

Shriniwas Pratinidhi alias Bhawanrao who wrote a letter to Janoji in 1763[74] wrote in his letter to note that Peshwa had treated the Chhatrapati Ramraja most improperly making him practically his prisoner. Therefore, he was commanded by the Chhatrapati to seek the assistance of Nizam Ali. He also desired that Janoji should assist the Nizam in this task if putting an end to the Peshwa's excesses. As per command of Chhatrapati Janoji met with Nizam and this was a great service he rendered to the Chhatrapati.[75] He sincerely felt that the institution of the Chhatrapati and his council should continue to exist as before.[76]

When it was known that Nizam Ali and Janoji had made agreement for joint operations against Peshwa, Raghunathrao sent urgent message to Malharrao Holkar informing him the plans of Nizam Ali to attack Satara and capture Chhatrapati and go in pursuit of the Peshwa. Nizam sent the list of demands to the Peshwa for immediate compliance. Nana Phadnis informed Baburao Krishna Apte at Satara about all precautions to save Chhatrapati at the fort.[77] Nizam Ali sent several divisions of troops towards Satara. Gamaji had gone to Satara. Plundering on the way several villages he besieged the fort

of Satara but could not take it. Madhavrao wrote Mahipatrao Trimbak Purandare at Satara that he should keep Chhatrapati in the fort of Satara.[78] But Ramraja did not agree to confine himself to fort at Satara. Madhavrao again wrote that situation was very critical and Chhatrapati should not live in the town. Chhatrapati was not well, so, in any case he should remain in the fort of Satara.[79]

Ramraja was sent to the fort for safety and the period of his freedom from restraint suddenly came to an end. Chhatrapati came under the control of Peshwa. Afterwards, due to the changed situation, Janoji and Gopalrao joined the Peshwa, and Nizam Ali had been defeated at Rakash Bhavan in 1763.

In this crisis Gamaji became nervous. If Chhatrapati Ramraja was in the town, it was possible to replace the Chhatrapati. But Peshwa had foiled the game and Gamaji became helpless and thus the pact had come to an end.

Ramraja's Release:

After the battle of Rakshabhawan which was won mainly through Madhavrao's initiative, Ramraja was formally crowned at Satara. On 23 March 1763[80] Vyankaji Mankeshwar was appointed as administrator of Chhatrapati.

From Peshwa's side Mahipatrao Purandare was already there. For the fort security Ranoji Shinde was appointed. Vyankoji Potnis was shrewd and had connection with Raghunathrao. So, Peshwa took precaution in appointing Ranoji Shinde. In 1765 Ganesh Vitthal Vaghmare was appointed as Chhatrapati's administrator. In 1763 Madhavrao appointed Bhawanrao to the office of Pratinidhi and Yamaji Shivdev to the office of Mutaliq. Nana Phadnis was appointed as Chhatrapati's Phadnis. The political development of the council left the Peshwa with no alternative except restoring the status quo at Satara although the Peshwa did not like to do so. There was no need for Peshwa to take any consultation regarding the administration or appointment. However, he was looking for a suitable opportunity to change the composition of the council.

Peshwa Madhavrao released Raja of Satara and his formal coronation was performed. But the administration of Maratha State came under the control of Peshwa. Madhavrao Peshwa was a good administrator. In the civil government he envigorated departments by his personal supervision. He could enforce discipline on the reflectory vassals, with greater success than his predecessor. He kept the entire military machine under his direct control and organised well equipped armies for the service.

After the battle of Rakashbhawan Janoji Bhosale found that he had gained nothing from his alliance with Nizam. Peshwa had given to Janoji the territories secured from Nizam, districts worth 32 lakhs, and the remaining portion was divided among the different Sardars.[81] Miraj was restored to Gopalrao. Balaji Janardhan was appointed to the office of Fadnis and came to be known henceforth as Nana Phadnis. He appointed Ramshastri Prabhune in Judicial department. Gamaji Yamaji was not satisfied. Raghunathrao did not keep quiet. He opened negotiation with Haider Ali, Nizam, Janoji Bhosale and Damaji Gaikwad. Janoji intended to release Raghunathrao from confinement and restore power. Peshwa knew that many Sardars would openly rally round Raghunathrao, if he regained his freedom. In this crisis Janoji's position became diplorable and he had interview with Peshwa at Kanpur and peace was concluded. Afterwards he remained loyal to the Peshwa till his death in May 1772. Thus the Bhosale or Nagpur Chhatrapati's Sena Saheb Subha came under the control of Peshwa.

Chhatrapati Ramraja was released by Peshwa but the position of Chhatrapati became powerless. Administration and military organization came under the Peshwa's direct control. Naturally, Maratha administration and Chhatrapati became nominal. The humiliating subordination was not compensated by plenty and to the unfortunate

puppet was not granted even the mean satisfaction of getting his imprisonment in the midst of luxury and pomp. Ramraja was restricted by Peshwa government, strict regulations were framed even about such minute details as the grains required for the Raja's stables. Venkoji Mankeshwar and Vishnu Narhar were informed that requisition for the grain required for the horse in the Raja's stable[82] should be made every day. In making the requisition the number of horses newly arrived and that of horses sent away should be taken into consideration. The Huzur came to know that instead of doing that you get from Pratinidhi grain for eight days at a time. This shows what was the position and prestige of Raja of Satara.

Not only this but the Chhatrapati also lacked even the very necessities of the middle class Maratha with slender income. "The Maharaja had not even a garden for growing green vegetables and that excellent prince ordered that a garden suitable for vegetables should be given to him. Even the Maharaja had no pasture ground for his horse either".[83] Chhatrapati's entertainments were restricted because the allowance was not sanctioned by the Peshwa. The Peshwa sanctioned an allowance of Rs. 80 per month for two dancing girls Hira and Achhi. And an allowance was made for feeding a pet leopard. "Perhaps the meanest of Maratha Sardars would not have

liked to change place with him. An organic part of the state, he had not the ordinary right of an ordinary man of dismissing and appointing his servants".

It was now accepted that the Chhatrapati of Satara should continue as the de jure sovereign and that the Peshwa in Poona should be the de facto sovereign. In case there was no capable person in the office of the Peshwa, that office should be represented by Council of Ministers to be called Karbharis.

Madhavrao nominated his brother Narayanrao for Peshwaship advising him that he should take advice of Sakharam Bapu and Nana Phadnis in administration. Narayanrao received the robes at Satara from the Raja on 13 December 1773. Sakharam Bapu was invested with the office of administrator. It was reported that, "The Sshrimant is impatient and irritable, his levity becomes apparent, he acts rashly upon the information conveyed to him by petty and irresponsible person. He is yet a child and does not follow the guidance of Sakharam Bapu. God save the State".

The nine month regime of Narayanrao did not make any change in Raja's position. The Raja had no authority to decide about the marriage of his daughters. It was done by the Peshwa. A Saranjam worth Rs. 5,000 was given to each of the two wives of the Satara Raja,

and a Saranjam worth Rs. 3,000 to each of their two daughters Ranubai Nimbalkar and Santubai Mahadik.[84]

Rathunathrao prepared a plot against Narayanrao Peshwa. Narayanrao Peshwa was killed by Sumersinh Gardi. Raghoba became very unpopular and the council of Barbhais was formed in the Poona government against him. The Chhatrapati of Satara and the Patwardhans of Miraj helped the Barbhais. Raghunathrao decided to seize Satara and the Chhatrapati in order to strengthen his position against the Barbhai.[85] A letter addressed by Nana Phadnis to his Satara agent Baburao Apte on 3 February 1774, says -

> *Bapu and I with Moroba Dada have decided to serve the master whose salt we have been eating for four generations. We have gained the support of Trimbakrao, Sabaji Bhosale, Vamanrao Patwardhan and of the Huzurat troops with the object of protecting Gangubai's person. We have brought her to the Purandar fort for safety and propose to go to Satara soon. Sakharam Bapu is entirely in our scheme and you must entertain no suspicion on his account.*

Nana was busy consolidating his own party. In order to safeguard the situation at Purandar, he was anxious to secure the support of the Nizam and Sabaji

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Bhosale. But they were not ready in his favour. Nana Phadnis appointed Baburao Apte for Raja's security and informed him that no one can meet Raja at the fort. The Satara fort was guarded by his men. Even at the Dassera procession Chhatrapati was surrounded by Nana's troops. When Nana met Chhatrapati at Satara, Chhatrapati came down from the fort.[86]

It was clear that Chhatrapati was completely under the control of Nana Phadnis, who had emerged in the Maratha State. Raja, helpless as he was, could not take any decision about Barbhai or appointment of the Peshwa. The proclamation was issued in the name of Chhatrapati -

> *Raghunath Bajirao has committed the gross sin of bringing about the ruin of the Peshwa Narayanrao and of forcibly exacting robes of that office from us. He has now been deprived of that position and a force has been despatched against him under Trimbakrao Pethe. Every one is called upon to collaborate in this sacred task.*[87]

Baburao Apte had long lived with the Chhatrapati at Satara and now promptly thwarted every move of Raghunathrao for reaching Satara and taking possession of the Chhatrapati's person. If Chhatrapati had opposed the Raghunathrao's position and selected any one from

Peshwa family as Peshwa, there was possibility to avoid worthless activities of Raghunathrao. But he had no power and authority to take any decision. Raghunathrao had directed his march towards Satara, and found himself confused and in his usual way sent his agents to Purandar asking terms for accommodation. Trimbakrao Pethe came closely upon his track. Raghunathrao's hopes of remaining the legitimate Peshwa were soon shattered by the birth of a son to Gangabai at Purandar on 18 April 1774. The Chhatrapati offered his own heartfelt congratulations for the providential event and readily granted the robes of Peshwaship to the infant. A special darbar was held at Purandar on 28 May 1774.

Ramraja's Successor:

After the robes of new Peshwa, Raghunathrao fled to Surat, where he entered into a treaty with the English. Raghunathrao was all along negotiating with the English for their help to reinstate him at Poona. When Nana received the news of the treaty of Surat, he was incensed at the rank opportunism of the English.[88] He made up his mind to capture Raghunathrao, but he was in need of co-operation of Shinde and Holkar. Nana had agreed to make a grant of Shindkhed to Shinde for co-operating with Haripant Phadake in the pursuit of Raghunathrao. Nana was absolutely alert to the

machination of the English. In 1773 Warren Hastings wrote to the Governor at Bombay to withdraw the force that were supporting Raghunathrao. The ministers in Poona were very much annoyed with the policy of British authorities at Bombay and Calcutta.

Raghunathrao lost the chance of regaining his power at Poona owing to the failure of Morobadada scheme. However, his hopes again revived when Warren Hastings himself earnestly renewed the war by sending troops, money and supplies from Bengal and even ordering the Madras authorities to join in the efforts. Ramraja, the Chhatrapati of Satara was on his death bed and Warren Hastings in his zeal to control the Maratha State, tried to make Mudhoji Bhosale of Nagpur the Chhatrapati.[89] To that British move Mudhoji asserted his claim to the throne of Satara. Mudhoji persisted in misguiding Hastings and advanced a proposal for perpetual alliance with British:

(1) As a well-wisher of Satara Raj[90] it is his duty to see that on its Mushad the nearest lineal descendant of Shivaji is established.

(2) If any chief offers opposition he shall be defeated and his territory divided between the English and Mudhoji.

(3) Relation with the Nizam shall be determined in accordance with his attitude towards the Raja of Satara.

(4) If in pursuance of this treaty of the Governor General shall join the Maharaja in establishing and maintaining a lineal descendant of Shivaji on the Satara Raj, Maharaja should procure to the English the grant of Salsette, Bassein, and also a few ports on the seacoast.

Thus Hastings intended that with the help of English troops he should proceed to Satara and proclaim himself the sovereign of Maratha State and make Peshwa subordinate. But Nana was capable of outwitting Hastings in his bold move. He at once countered Hastings' move by bringing to Poona Mudhoji's young son Raghuji now at the head of British intervention. At the very time Nana sent Kashaba, his agent and troops were sent for Satara.[91] Because Nana was suspicious about Raghunath-rao's movement. Ramraja was not feeling well; so he came down from the fort with Babarao Apte. Govindrao remained for the security of fort. Gifts were given to the Brahmins for the Chhatrapati's health.

The precarious condition of the Raja of Satara posed a question of adoption. Ramraja had no male issue

but had two daughters, Ranubai and Santubai. He was thinking about his grandson from Mahadik family for his successor.[92] But Nana had a plan that Chhatrapati should be a descendant from direct Bhosale's family and was endeavouring to secure some one from Bhosale's family. He sent Vishnu Narhari with that proposal to Satara.[93] After this the helpless Raja accepted Nana's proposal and Vithoji Bhosale, son of Trimbakji Bhosale of Vavi was adopted by Ramraja.[94] He was a patil of Vavi, a village in Nasik district, which formed a part of the Bhosale's private dominion. Trimbakji Bhosale was descendant of the family of Vithoji Bhosale, the brother of Maloji Bhosale, and uncle of Shivaji-the-Great.

The adoption took place on 15 September 1777. After this his name was changed to that of Shahu Maharaj calling as 'Dhakate Shahu Maharaj' or Shahu the younger. Nana had informed Babarao Apte that only four poor Brahmins and a soft natured man (Salsood Marathe) should be invited for adoption ceremony.[95] Pantsachiv, Amatya and Govindrao Chitnis attended the adoption ceremony of Chhatrapati.[96]

Nana's action in getting Vithoji Bhosale adopted by the Raja of Satara rendered Hastings' ambitious expectation quite negatory. Hastings, however, continued

his efforts to induce Mudhoji to go to Satara under British protection, and claim the throne but the latter wisely rejected his wild plan.[97] After this British were defeated at Talegaon and Nana Phadnis and Mahadji Shinde became sole managers of Peshwa government. They wielded full power right upto the death of the young Peshwa in 1795.

After Shahu, Peshwa became central authority in Maratha Raj. But Peshwa Narayanrao was an incompetent and unpromising boy and his uncle was ambitious. At this juncture it was felt in all Maratha political circles that the re-establishment of central authority was absolutely necessary[98] and pressingly urgent. Mudhoji Bhosale himself had begun to move in that direction. Warran Hastings had clearly perceived the possibility of a fruitful intervention in Maratha political affairs in the name of the Chhatrapatis of Satara. But the ministers joined the Barbhai to maintain the spirit of co-operation. But in reality each was trying to further his own interest. Therefore, the ministers in the Court of Poona did not entertain the idea of restoring power to the Chhatrapati.

Sardars like Shinde, Holkar and Gaikwad were more or less the creatures of the Peshwa. None of them was ignorant about the position of Chhatrapati. Hence

no body took up the idea of restoring the Chhatrapati. Every one publicly discussed the urgency of a strong central authority but in heart every one prayed for weak master.

Chhatrapati of Satara died on 9 December 1777 soon after the adoption ceremony took place. Ramraja's life was miserable. He also lacked courage and skill of an administrator and reduced the Chhatrapati's authority to a zero.

Administration of the Maratha State:

In the regime of Shahu (1707-1749) the administration was controlled by the Raja. In any case the last decision was taken by the Raja but Peshwa became the head of the Maratha state when Shahu left two important orders for him. Tarabai helped in giving finishing touches to the further rise of Peshwa by imprisoning Ramraja in the fort of Satara and thus preparing a perpetual prison for her own dynasty.

After the Sangola Agreement, Poona became the administrative centre and Chhatrapati's residence was at Satara. The central government, that is, Ashta Pradhan Mandal became an outdated body. Pratinidhi, Sachiv and Senapati were the only members of Ashtapradhan who had some administrative functions. Peshwa controlled

all administration very tactfully. He was, therefore, the head of the feudal nobles and was one of them at the same time. The feudal nobles rendered military services in return of their fiefs or Saranjams and were independent rulers in everything. The villages in Maharashtra proper, however, were managed by their own officers under the supervision of the Saranjam's agents. Thus, the whole constitution was a curious combination of democracy and feudal autocracy. It is impossible to call it a monarchy, aristocracy or democracy but it could be called military republic. In this period the empire was based not upon confidence but jealousy and incapable of a comprehensive policy of national patriotism.

Balaji Bajirao was a man of considerable political sagacity, who took care in a progressive state of improvement. He appointed fixed Mamlatdars or Subhedars each of whom had charge of several districts. They held absolute charge of the police, the revenue and the civil administration of the districts. The commencement of a better administrative system for Maratha Raj is ascribed to Ramchandra Bawa and Sadashivrao who improved it on his suggestion. Balkrishna Gadgil was appointed head of the Poona Nyayadhish and the police was much envigorated at the capital. In his government Panchayats, the ordinary tribunals of civil justice began to improve.

And all central administration came under the control of Balaji Bajirao.

The 'usurption' by the Peshwa of the headship of the Maratha state was completed during the regime of Balaji Bajirao. But this change made two effects on the Maratha administration. The first was that Shivaji-the-Great's administration system was abolished and Peshwa was made autocratic. Secondly, it created two distinct classes of Sardars in Maratha empire. The old nobles and Gaikwad, Dabhade, Bhosale of Nagpur claimed to hold their possession by virtue of Shahu's Sanad and regarded themselves as equal of the Peshwa. The nobles like Shinde, Holkar, Raste, Patwardhan regarded Peshwa as the master whose bread they ate. The old nobles had come to think of themselves as independent rulers of their own principalities. This loose confederacy of ambitious feudal chiefs naturally failed to create the spirit of patriotic co-operation which was there in the past.

Peshwa Balaji Bajirao's half-hearted approach and tickle-mindedness was responsible for this. In the succession dispute of Nagpur Gadi he had adopted dilatory tactics. Peshwa thought that there was a golden opportunity to weaken the House of Bhosale. Peshwa Balaji Bajirao was sour on the past behaviour of the Bhosale. It was his duty to maintain the unity of Maratha

empire but he indirectly assisted the cause of British. In the case of Ranoji Shinde, Peshwa had wasted precious time and damaged the interest of Maratha state. Peshwa interfered in the succession dispute of Angrai, Jaipure succession case. In these cases Peshwa was in a way harming the basic interest of Maratha state.

In the period of Peshwa Madhavrao-I whole administration was controlled by the Peshwa. He was undoubtedly a great administrator and soldier. In diplomacy he surpassed all his predecessors. He paid minute attention to every detail of the day-to-day administration. In the words of Sardesai -

> *The very name of this Peshwa came to be held in awe by the rulers and the ruled in and out of the Maharashtra State. ... Quite a new generation of honest and efficient officials, clerks, accountants, supervisors, revenue collectors, military suppliers came to be reared up.*

His first step was to condemn with the unprincipled conduct and duplicity of Janoji Bhosale and to correct Raghoba's errors. He restored the office of the Pratinidhi to Bhavanrao and Miraj to Gopalrao. The post of Fadanvis was bestowed on Nana Fadanvis. The genius of Madhavrao thus gave to the administration that vigorous

tone which placed him afterwards in the affection of his subjects.

Peshwa had strengthened his own position but he had weakened the position of Maratha union. Sardars tried to profit themselves by demanding a suitable recompense for their assistance. Not only that but they had no hesitation to join the Nizam if it served their self-interest. Malharrao Holkar, Damaji Gaikwad, Shinde and last but not the least Gopalrao Patwardhan had indulged in these tactics quite often. The real reason for the Peshwa's hostile feelings lay in the power-struggle between Raghunathrao and Peshwa. The different constituents of the Maratha state were united under the central government by hoards of Mughal interest. There was not a unitary political power. It was a confederacy of semi-independent chiefs. The responsibility of utilising the services of these chiefs lay on the Peshwa, the chief executive at the centre. The Chhatrapati was a puppet and the Peshwa by his short sighted and partisan measures, alienated the chiefs weakening thereby the confederacy. In the tussel for power the Peshwa did great injury to the chiefs.

The civil war at Poona weakened the central authority which was strong upto the death of Madhavrao. The guiding power in the administration inevitably passed on to a minister or a board of ministers. But

no minister, however dictatorial, could exactly fill the place of a lawful master. A minister is a servant, he merely exercised his master's authority but a minister can be turned out by that master any moment. A minister always faces the rivals, who dispute his authority and plot against him. As a result he has perpetually to devote half his time and attention towards such rivals. He cannot issue a clarion-call to the nation at large in his own name in a crisis but only as the deputy of the sovereign.

It is in these circumstances that Nana Phadnis liquidated the council of the Barbhai and made himself the sole autocrat. It was not a selfish measure but a step directed by the needs of the nation in the life and death struggle with enemies. And the Maratha administration came under the control of Nana Phadnis. It was not possible for the Barbhais to exercise any real control over the distant parts. Thus, after the Madhavrao's death Peshwa's position plummetted down; it ws also the beginn.ng of the decline of Maratha power.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1 His name was really Rajaram, but there is the custom among the Hindus that a wife would not utter the name of her husband. Tarabai rearranged the word into Ramraja.

2 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R., Madhya Vibhag, Vol. VII, p. 16.

3 Rajwade, Vol. VIII, No. 184.

4 Shahu later rewarded Durgabai for her services by giving her the Sardeshmukhi Vatan of Karad. Rajwade, Vol. VIII No. 170.

5 Sardesai, G.S., M.R., Madhya Vibhag, Vol. II, p. 18. Shivaji III died of Smallpox in 1726 at Panhala.

6 Peshwa Daftar, 26:36.
Daryabai seems to have acted very cautiously. She was unwilling to hand over Ramraja to someone of the three, namely Tarabai, Peshwa or his brother.

7 Sardesai, G.S. - M.R., Madhya Vibhag, Vol. IV (Ed. 1992), p. 237.

8 Gopal Mahadev Pendharkar, a partisan of the Peshwa was sent to Vishalgad to fetch Bhawanrao.

9 Peshwa Daftar, 4.
M.R., Vol. IV (ed. 1992), p. 240.

10 Peshwa Daftar, 28.58.

11 Ibid., 6.41.

12 Ibid., 6.20.

13 Ibid., 6.20,22.

14 Ibid., 6.86.

15 Ibid., 6.52.

16 Ibid., 6.56.

17 Ibid., 6.49.

18 Ibid., 6.79.

19 Ibid., 6.68.

20 Brijkishore: Tarabai and Her Times.

21 Peshwa Daftar, 6.66, Vol. I.

22 P.D., Sanika, 4 - 1834.

23 P.D. 26.58.

24 Ibid., 246.

25 Ibid.

26 Peshwa daftar, 6.36, 46, 57.

27 Ibid., 26.95.

28 Sardesai, G.S., M.R., Vol. IV (Ed.II).

29 Ibid.

30 Rajwade, Vol. VI, No. 278.

31 Ibid.

32 Sardesai, G.S., M.R., Vol. IV (Ed.II), p. 33.

33 Rajwade, Vol. III, Nos. 71 to 75.

34 Sardesai, G.S., M.R., Vol. IV, p. 36.

35 Peshwa Daftar, 26.189.

36 Sardesai; G.S. - M.R., Vol. IV (ed. II), p. 37.

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39 Ibid.

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48 Garge, S.M. - Karweer Riyasat, p. 172.

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54 Rajwade, Vol. VI, 300.

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56 The document of compromise in detail, see Rajwade, VI, No. 276.

57 Dr. Pawar, A.G., Tarabaikalin Kagadpatre, Vol. III, p. 152. Also Peshwa Daftar, 6.93.

58 Brij Kishore - Tarabai and Her Times, p. 210. Sardesai, G.S., M.R. (Ed. II), Vol. IV, p. 267.

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61 Brij Kishore, Op.cit., p. 211.

62 Aitihasik Sankirn Sahitya, VII, p. 23.

63 P.D. - 31.144.

64 Aitihasik Sankirn Sahitya, VII, 91.

65 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L.No. 37.

66 Sardesai, G.S., M.R. Vol. V (ed. II), p. 46. Only Sardesai states that Janoji was present at Alegaon conference.

67 Sardesai, G.S., M.R. (ed.II), Vol. V, p. 49.

68 Sardesai, G.S., M.R. (ed.II), Vol. V, p. 50.

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84 Vad - Selection from Satara Rajap's and Peshwa's Diaries, Vol. I, p. 29.

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CHAPTER SIX

SHAHU-II

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CHAPTER SIX | SHAHU-II

Maratha nation, instead of uniting into a closely knit federation, became a loose, disjointed group of confederate states between 1750 and 1777. In the central government, the evil effects of the feudal system became manifest. Maratha chieftains kept on overt and covert negotiations with the enemies of the state. After the accession of Narayanrao Peshwa, the central government of Marathas under Nana Phadnis necessarily declined still further in power and prestige.[1] The death of Ramraja on 9 December 1977 made no effect on the situation. The separatist tendencies of central government began to shape further in the Maratha politics. Gaikwad tried to save his skin by concluding a treaty with the English, independently of Poona government. Angre, Sawant, remained totally indifferent. Shinde-Holkar hardly performed any notable military service and were rather sympathetic to Raghunathrao.[2] Bhosale of Nagpur had always been aloof from the politics of Poona government.

Such was the situation when Shahu-II was crowned as Chhatrapati of Satara in 1778. Baburao Apte suggested Nana that coronation ceremony would be arranged as

early as possible for political intrigue.[3] Shahu-II was crowned on 11 December 1778. His brother, Trimbakji and Chatursingh stayed at Satara. Chhatrapati married a daughter of Bhavanji Rajeshirke Darvankar named Anandibai. Anandibai succeeded in releasing Raja from Peshwa's harassment afterwards. Elphinstone gives a high complement to this lady in describing her as "an intelligent lady, a woman of talent and address, possessing good manners and good qualities". Raja Shahu II and his family lived at Satara fort under the control of Nana Phadnis. Vishnu Narhari was appointed for the fort administration. Saranjam was given to him.[4]

Chhatrapati and Poona Government:

After the death of Peshwa Madhavrao, Nana Phadnis and Mahadji Shinde became important figures in the Maratha government. They were mutually indispensable and got temperamentally antagonistic and suspicious of each other. The unity of Maratha State had created the internal trouble. Nana Phadnis was the sole ultimate authority in charge of Peshwa and nothing was done without his knowledge or sanction. The Phadnis was originally a subordinate secretarial officer, but in the period of Peshwa Sawai Madhavrao he rose to great power and authority. The two prominent traits of Nana's character, suspicion and timidity, influenced his acts

as guardian in a small measure.

Mahadji Shinde was another figure in the Maratha politics, who was a great warrior. He was a man of action above all. Nana essentially a rigid, methodical worker, trusted more the pen than the tongue. Each had his own personal agents living in the other camp and constantly reporting to their masters, whatever the other said or did. These temperamental differences soon developed into such discord and mistrust between the two leaders that a smooth working of the administration became impossible.

In this situation the Raja of Satara was set aside from the administration. Only for a formal occasion he was invited, such as marriage ceremony of the Peshwa. There was no permission to do any work in his authority. When Shahu-II ascended, the amount was sanctioned for the coronation and marriage ceremony by the Peshwa, Sadashivpant had given an account of this to Nana.[5] An aqueduct conveying water from Yavateshwar hill to the palace in Satara, being out of order, Peshwa sanctioned Rs. 800 for repairing it. Mimbaji Pawar was appointed by the Peshwa for training the Raja's son in the art of fencing on a salary of Rs. 12. Even the ceremonials dress was sanctioned by the Peshwa. Raja had no authority to solve the internal disputes about his private property.[6] Thus Maratha politics was entrenched between

pen-manship and intrigue on the one hand and in warfare and diplomacy on the other. The Emperor gave a new title called Vakil-i-Mutalik, the highest executive officer, to Mahadji Shinde and commanded him to take charge of all his affairs and administration. Mahadji Shinde paid his first formal visit to Peshwa. Mahadji also paid visit to Nana Phadnis. The presents were sent by the emperor with the written farman. In the farman the Peshwa was mentioned as 'Maharajadhiraj' and Mahadji as Maharaja of Sindia. To these Nana objected on the ground that they could be applied only to the Chhatrapati. But Chhatrapati was neither the emperor nor the Chhatrapati, nor even the Peshwa who wielded now the real power which the Chhatrapati's ancestors had once held. Shinde's power was not unquestionable and powerless. Raja of Satara gave necessary permission to him. There were serious differences between Mahadji and Nana Phadnis particularly over the corrupt police administration of Ghasiram, the ill treatment of the Sachiv of Bhor and other affairs. Mahadji intended to make the Chhatrapati an instrument for suppressing the Peshwa's power and Brahminical ascendency.

Raghunathrao Shankaraji Sachiv of Bhor died on 11 July 1791 and was succeeded by his grown up son Shankaraji. This Shankaraji had three wives. Shankaraji's step-mother, a young spirited widow, appealed to Nana

Phadnis for an efficient manager to look after the affairs of the family. Nana Phadnis appointed Baji Moreshwar as manager, who was Nana's agent directly acting under his orders. At Jejuri, in the Ramnavami festival Sachiv was wounded by Karbhari's mob. Mahadji tried to stop this harassment to Sachiv. But Karbhari prevented true facts from reaching Nanasaheb's ears. Mahadji delivered frequent remonstrances to Nana on this subject. Baji Moreshwar and his son were punished and Sachiv was restored to his power, and was allowed to manage his estate as before.

There was another example of the prevailing mal-administration by the Ministers. Poona as the capital town had a special long-term governor like Naro Appaji who earned a unique reputation for efficiency, justice and tranquility in the city affairs for half a century Anandrao Kashi and his successor Ghasiram enjoyed the full trust of Nana Phadnis, particularly as his Minister in his conduct of the Maratha government. Ghasiram's administration was notoriously worse than his predecessors. He was the man who had been appointed to watch the movements and plans of Raghunathrao. In the month of Shravan when Brahmans from all parts of India had gathered in Poona for sharing the annual distribution of charity, Ghasiram arrested the Telugu Brahmins who

died by opium poisoning to which they had been addicted. Ghasiram was forcibly brought out to the crowd from his cell and mounted him on a camel and gave him to the crowd who stoned him to death near the palace.

Though after these incidences the Peshwa began asserting his power, he did not relax the strict supervision of Nana and tried to be free with the help of Mahadji Shinde. But they did not make any attempt for restoring the position of Raja of Satara. Raja subsisted on a very small amount of money granted to him by the Peshwa.[7] He had tried to keep aloof from the real fact very cautiously and shrewdly. The poor Maharaja, however, could not do anything without praying to the Peshwa. So poor and helpless was he that he did not give any customary presents to his servants or parents. The Saranjams were granted to each of the two queens and to each of their two daughters by the Peshwa. These functional expenditures had been recovered by the Peshwa from Raja's own jagir.[8]

Fitzclarence has very aptly compared the Raja of Satara with the rois-fainearts of France and the Peshwa with the Mayors of Palace -

> *In both cases the son of the usurper, being a man of equal abilities to his father continued to exercise the functions of government,*

till by degrees the people became accustomed to the rule of an imprisoned monarch, whose authority was exercised by the master. But the force of appearing to act under the orders of the Rajah of Satara, a descendant of nominally receiving from the Rajah the Khelaut, or dress of honour, appointing him to the situation.

Fitzcharence, Journal, pp. 285-286[9]

Chhatrapati and Nana Phadnis:

After the death of Madhavrao-II in 1795 the Maratha government lost the unity of cohesion and hastened the final ruin of the state. A dreadful scramble for power began, in which precious time was lost before a successor could be installed in the Peshwa's seat at Poona. Nana was conducting the provisional government and brought several boys to Poona for selection and adoption and formed written consent from the Chhatrapati of Satara. But Daulatrao Shinde's minister Baloba Tatya opposed to the plan initially though later on agreed to it. Raghuji Bhosale, Tukoji Holkar and Shinde had given the consent.[10] But Nana's plan of adoption caused more trouble than it was at first anticipated. Raghunathrao's son Bajirao began negotiation with the English, Shinde and Chhatrapati of Satara. In December 1795 he sent a secret agent to the British Resident Charles

Malet. No encouragement was given on account of the Governor General's policy of non-intervention. Bajirao found Shinde more helpful. It was agreed that Shinde should raise Bajirao to Peshwaship and Bajirao should pay him 1,25,000, grant a jagir of 25½ thousand rupees to him.[11] Bajirao gave promise to Chhatrapati of Satara, that if he will have robes of the Peshwaship, Chhatrapati would enjoy the prestige and authority like the late Chhatrapati Shahu. And under Chhatrapati's guidance he will spread Maratha power like Bajirao.[12]

Nana became aware of the plot and called Parshuram Bhau from his Jagir at Tasgaon to Poona. On Parshuram's arrival at Poona it was decided that he should bring Bajirao and his brother Chimnaji to Poona. Chimnaji should then be adopted and proclaimed as Peshwa.[13] Parshuram Bhau left Poona and arrived at Junner on 15 February 1796, but Bajirao refused to hand over Chimanaji and argued that only he had the right to Peshwaship. Nana felt that any delay might tempt Daulatrao Shinde to march to Junner. So, he advised Bhau to persuade Bajirao and bring him and Chimanaji to Poona. When they arrived at Poona, Bajirao had an interview with Nana Fadnis. Nana gave him a declaration in writing assuring him of his support and co-operation. Bajirao also, on his part, signed a similar declaration to the effect that

he would never interfere with Nana Fadnis' deeds.[14] Ultimately, with the insistence of Nana Phadnis an agreement was signed between them in 1796. But the main difficulty was that Bajirao had already entered into an agreement with Shinde. Shinde was likely to lose the large amount which Bajirao had agreed to pay to him. Shinde had begun his march to Poona. Nana wrote to the Bombay government that the approach of Shinde with his whole force was in progress. At the same time Baloba began openly demanding that Nana should retire from the administration. He should pay towards the arrears of the Shinde's troops. This created ill-feeling between Nana and Shinde.

Nana Phadnis did not consider it prudent and made preparation for leaving Poona. He had proceeded to Satara to Chhatrapati for friendly touch. On the 21st of March 1796, Nana left Poona with about 3,000 horses and foot, accompanied by Appa Balwant, Gangadhar Pant Bhau, Abo Shalukar, Raga Pant Godbole. Before his arrival a letter came from Bajirao asking the Raja of Satara not to admit Nana in the fort.[15] Nana's ambitions for power now led him to hatch up another scheme. On reaching Satara he planned to release the Chhatrapati from his confinement and to set him up as the rightful sovereign of the Maratha state.[16] He had a plan to set up

a new administration at Satara in his name under his control. He adopted to give a crushing blow to the very existence of the Peshwa's government at Poona. He made proposal to the Chhatrapati to the effect of offering an advance of Rs. one crore for raising an army.[17] But the Chhatrapati did not agree to Nana's plan because he had become a source of power, and was supported both by Bajirao and Shinde. Nana visited the Chhatrapati at the Satara fort and returned to the city below, having decided to obtain the robes for Chimanaji Appa. So, Nana encamped at the village of Karanje near Satara for Chhatrapati's favourable reply. But owing to his recent treatment to him, Shahu had no confidence in Nana.[18]

Nana Phadnis's plan to restore Chhatrapati was frustrated. Nana Phadnis in this move was actuated neither by any conviction of the capacities of the Chhatrapati nor by any sense of justice, was quite obvious. If Nana had any consideration for the sovereign position and right of Chhatrapati, he would not have confined the Chhatrapati at Satara fort. But the high-handed and over-bearing attitude of Nana and the strict surveillance imposed upon Chhatrapati, by the latter had gone a long way in developing that bitterness into positive enmity.[19] He had restricted Chhatrapati so

rigorously as not to allow even the relations of that sovereign to visit him.[20] That plan was fully a selfish motive of Nana and extremely distrustful of him. Shahu-II was an intelligent and shrewd man having good qualities. He had observed Poona government's motives and unequivocally rejected Nana's plan. Chhatrapati of Satara made preparation to give a crushing blow to the Poona government. Thus, the plan of the latter to regain the control over the State through the channel of the Chhatrapati also crumbled to pieces. Thus, Nana Phadnis attempted to bring the peculiar political position of Chhatrapati of Satara into use, but he failed twice, when Mahadji Shinde was jealous of Nana's influence at the Peshwa's court, and after the suicide of Madhavrao-II.

In the meantime Shinde and Bajirao formed a plan of their own at Poona to remove Nana altogether from the administration. So, Bajirao left Poona for Satara. Bajirao was entirely in the dark regarding the new developments. When he came to know that Parashuram Bhau and Shinde had made a plan that Bajirao should be arrested and Chimanaji invested as the Peshwa, Parashuram Bhau was reluctant to proceed towards Satara and Shinde talked nothing but about payment. Bajirao left for Satara.[21] He maintained the communication with

Nana who was at Satara. Thus, the events of this period went a long way in emittering the relationships of the different Maratha chiefs. Nana and Shinde became irreconcilable enemies of each other. Nana formed conspiracy of Mahad for Bajirao's accession to Peshwaship. Ultimately Bajirao was raised to the Peshwaship on 5 December, 1796.

Chhatrapati's Attempts to Regain Power

The new Chhatrapati took to his high position in strong hopes of improving the lot of his family, and serving the Maratha state, so far as it lay in his power. But within a short period he came to realise the real position of Chhatrapati. After that crisis, poor Raja of Satara was now called upon to send fresh robes of Peshwaship with which Bajirao was invested on 5 December 1796. None of the principal chiefs, nor even Shinde and Holkar cared to be present at the ceremony. So, Bajirao's government was established. Aba Shalukar who had been sent to Satara[22] returned to Poona on 4 December with clothes and investiture, and a ceremony took place at night. In the new administration Nana Phadnis became Prime Minister with Trimbakrao Parchure as his assistant, and the command of army was given to Naro Pant Chakradeo. But from the very beginning

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Nana Phadnis was losing his control over the government. The first thing that Bajirao did on becoming the Peshwa was to liberate and bring near his person all those advisers, who had been severely punished in the last regime. These now sought to inflict retaliation upon Nana Phadnis for the wrongs they had suffered at his hands. After a few days tension between them became so acute that Bajirao-II who had given a promise to Shahu-II that if he had robes of the Peshwaship, the former would gain a prestige and authority like the late Chhatrapati Shahu forgot it totally. Shahu-II was almost confined to the limits of Satara town. He had to live a frugal life within the meagre amount which the Poona Darbar had sanctioned.[23] The Peshwa Darbar went to the extent of curtailing the allowance of Royal family. Chhatrapati was made to depend for everything even for a new flag, on Poona Darbar. For instance, the private secretary of the Chhatrapati Shahu-II of Satara wrote to Poona:

> *There are no camels here for domestic work They have died long back. We have to carry luggage on elephant back but they too are tired and useless for transport. There are no camels in town.*
>
> *The Raja has no good steeds for riding. He is a good rider but for want of steeds at*

present he has stopped riding; so, please send some good horses.

A flag which was made two years back out of the cloth sent from Poona is already torn. A new flag is necessary on the occasion of Dassera. Please send a piece of cloth enough for a flag and two Patakas.

The sons of Maharaja are fond of horse and elephants. But there are no ponies and elephants here which are useful for them. Please send ponies and elephants.[24]

The requirement of the household of the Satara Raja was seldom met for such requests were made very often to the Poona Darbar by Raja's family. Shahu, the Raja of Satara, was the first to carry on hostilities with Poona government. The Chhatrapati was curious to get rid of the thraldom exercised over him by the Peshwa. Ins reality, he was the master of the Maratha State and Peshwa was their servant. During Nana Phadnis's regime, the Chhatrapati of Satara was reduced to utter indignance. His miseries increased tremendously during the last three years. He was no more than merely the titular head of the kingdom. Chhatrapati was sanctioned Saranjam or Jagir after the recommendation of Nana. He was under the tight control of Peshwa and Nana.[25]

The only function that the Chhatrapati was at

this time called upon to perform was to supply robes of Peshwaship to anybody at a requisition coming from Poona. It has been dependent on the sweet will now of Nana than Bajirao. Whether the person to be so invested had fitness to rule the state or not was immaterial. The position of the Raja of Satara was indeed peculiar. Chhatrapati's affairs were managed by Nana's agents Sadashivpant Abhyankar and Baburao Apte.[26]

The situation in Poona had become more chaotic than ever. The two principal competitors for power, namely, Bajirao-II and Nana Phadnis had been joined by two others, Daulatrao Shinde and Parshurambhau Patwardhan. The recent rapid changes at Poona enraged the susceptibilities of the court of Satara. They were incited by the Shinde's ladies whose was against Daulatrao and Peshwa was in progress. That was a clear call for the revolution in the present wicked government. Shahu-II had a younger brother named Chatursing a spirited and possessing ambition and capacity. Chatursing went to Kolhapur and obtained the co-operation of that Maharaja for a joint effort to effect a political change. Shahu-II decided to use this opportunity not only to get his own back on Nana but to reassert his power by disavowing the Peshwa as well.

In 1797 Peshwa Bajirao and Shindė planned Nana's

imprisonment. Bajirao encouraged Raja of Satara to free himself from Nana's control.[27] This was an excuse enough for the Chhatrapati to take instant action. It was a welcome opportunity which Raja Shahu and his brother seized with alertness. They at once collected a few followers such as Bapuji Mahadik, Bhawanji Shirke and Vyankoji Mohite and attacked the residence of the Nana's agent Apte and Ambyankar in the town. Raja aided by his brother Chatursing and some of his relations established his own government. Thus, the Chhatrapati became his own master both in the fort and the town of Satara.[28] Shivram Thite was deputed from Poona to take charge of the fort Satara on behalf of Peshwa but Chhatrapati refused to hand it over.

Thus, after taking over the Satara fort and arresting Nana's officer, he called upon the Kolhapur Chhatrapati and Daulat Shinde to come to his assistance in re-establishing his authority as the real head of the Maratha Raj. In January 1798 he appealed to Shivaji of Kolhapur: "You should start with the utmost hurry so that you get here before the news of the Chhatrapati's uprising against the Peshwa reaches Poona and countermeasures can be set in motion.[29]

This success of Chhatrapati so frightened Bajirao that he deputed Madhavrao Raste,[30] to put down the King

and take possession of the town and fort. Madhavrao Raste arrived at Satara in 1798. He left his troops at a distance and himself with a few followers entered the city. The Raja also began to collect the troops. Moreover, four thousand of his men made a sudden attack on Raste's party.[31] Chatursing who, with a considerable force descended from the fort upon the city, on 16 June, 1798, drove away Raste several miles back. After the unsuccessful attempt to connonade the fort, Madhavrao Raste left Satara and retreated to Malgaon. Chhatrapati Shahu was in full control of Satara and Shahunagar, the bustling city that had sprung up below the fort walls. Raja Shahu wrote to the Peshwa complaining of the high-handedness of his agents.

Madhavrao Râste who stayed at Malgaon urgently wrote a letter to Peshwa to send Parshuram Bhau. Because without him the affairs of Satara could not be normalised.[32] The Peshwa realised fully the dangerous implication of the situation and coalition between Satara and Kolhapur. It might have resulted in a disastrous civil war and destroyed the whole Maratha confederacy. This reverse threw Bajirao into extreme consternation as he had no armed force of his own. Parshuram Bhau, at this time, was a state prisoner at Mandavgad. Bajirao-II decided to release Parshuram Bhau Patwardhan from imprisonment and to send him against Satara. He was allowed

to collect troops and go to Satara on condition that he would pay a sum of twenty lakhs as the price for his freedom. At Satara Shahu did not receive the help he expected from Shinde or Raja of Kolhapur. The Raja of Kolhapur had, however, already marched for Satara and arrived at Islampur. But his further progress was arrested at Karad, which was the headquarters of Pratinidhi's principality. The river Koyana lay between his most dire path to Satara. The place from where crossing was possible was blocked by Pratinidhi's troops. Thus, the right of way was denied. Chhatrapati of Kolhapur did not advance further and began plundering neighbouring districts and raising contribution.

On August 16, 1798 Parshuram Bhau arrived at Satara and forded the river Venna. Bhau joined Raste and in the battle that followed the resistance of the Raja was broken down and his army scattered. Chhatrapati Shahu had realised that Daulatrao Shinde was not after all coming to uphold his cause. His major ally now was Kolhapur. Raja gave a call to the Raja of Kolhapur that, "Come quickly together with your troops; Parshuram Bhau is only waiting for a break in the rain to attack Satara. If you do not come my position will be quite hopeless". Parshuram Bhau's arrival in the vicinity of Satara must have made it imperative for Shivaji

to rush to Shahu's help. But he could not do so. Parshuram Bhau began his operation against Satara. Chhatrapati Shahu took shelter in the fort, while his brother Chatursing fled to Kolhapur territory. His army was defeated near Vasantgad. The city was plundered. The Raja did not hold out for long. In the beginning of September 1798 he surrendered the fort and Madhavrao Raste had occupied the fort. Parshuram Bhau established his post at Satara and met the Queen-mother. As per the agreement reached the force of Chhatrapati left the fort and a similar number of soldiers of Bhau entered and took charge of the fortress.[33] From this time onwards the Raja again lived prisoner as before. Bajirao passed the order of the attachment of the properties held by a number of people in the Raja's service, who had risen against the Poona government and very soft punishment was declared for the Brahmins.[34] Chhatrapati Shahu's attempt to obtain his freedom failed. Parshuram Bhau entrusted the management of Satara fort and the adjoining area to Madhavrao Raste on behalf of Peshwa.

This move of Raja to free himself has been called by many historians as a rebel of Raja of Satara but it was not true.

Constitutionally the King was the supreme authority as the Raja and Peshwa was only a member of the Ashta Pradhan Council. After Shahu's death Peshwa emerged

in the Maratha Raj and reduced the Chhatrapati. After the death of Madhavrao-II there was no other person to hold all administration from Peshwa side. In these circumstances Chhatrapati's attempts to assert himself cannot be called rebellion. If Raja of Kolhapur and Shinde had reached Satara in time, Shahu-II would have won against the Peshwa.

Thus Shahu-II was again confined to fort at Satara by the Peshwa who emerged powerful after this event. Sindia's affairs rapidly went from bad to worse. Nana Phadnis died on 13 March 1800 and his death proved a turning point in the Maratha history. Capt. Browning said, "Nana is gone and with him the Brahman Raj of Poona has fallen". The year 1800 began with a marked decline in the Maratha fortunes. Governor General Wellesley resented the Peshwa's refusal to join his war against Tipu Sultan. Bajirao tried to prevent mischief on the part of Holkar. At the same time he issued orders confiscating the whole estate of Holkars, a climax which aggravated the quarrel beyond remedy. Bajirao at this very moment invited another trouble. He signed the treaty of Bassein with the English, thus allowing them entry into the Maratha affairs.

After the war between Chhatrapati and Peshwa, Peshwa asserted against Chhatrapati whenever he had an opportunity. For example, because of some disturbances

in Satara Baburao Krishna was imprisoned with his family by the Raja of Satara, and his property was attached. But Peshwa ordered him the attached property to be restored. Balaji Mankeshwar was appointed as Peshwa's agent at Satara.[35]

In 1802 in the Poona government internal rivalry had reached the climax. A council consisting of Amritrao, Holkar, Bhosale and Patwardhans formed a group against Bajirao Peshwa and proposed to give Amritrao's son Vinayak Bapu in adoption to Yashodabai and make him Peshwa.[36] Holkar sent Fatehsingh Mane to Satara and brought from the Chhatrapati robes of Peshwaship for Vinayak Bapu.

At the very time Bajirao-II himself accompanied by Close. came to Poona on 13 May 1803 and robed Peshwaship under British protection. His restoration was celebrated by the British with very distinction of military honours and public rejoicing. Peshwa Bajirao-II as he ascended the Masnad had shown definite indication to conciliate the Chhatrapati. In 1807 when he started on a tour to the Southern part of the country on an excuse of pilgrimage to Kartikswami, he came to Mahuli near Satara with an intention of conciliating and winning over Chhatrapati. He increased the amount that had been fixed for Chhatrapati's expenses and in general he

tried to please him by all possible means. But Peshwa did not restore the Chhatrapati as real head of the Maratha Raj.

The administrative condition of Poona government was declining day by day. Taking advantage of this Chatursingh Bhosale thought of rising against Peshwa once again. He made friendship with Shamrao Ghatage, who brought Chatursingh's move to the notice of Bajirao, but the latter looked upon Chatursingh and Ghatage as rebels to be hunted down without mercy. Chatursingh appealed in vain to Daulatrao Shinde then in the grip of war with the English. At this time many of his Satara friends like Mugikar Maloji Raje, Bhavani Rajeshirke joined him. They proceeded to Nagpur and sought the sober advice of Raghuji Bhosale, who employed Chatursingh with his contingent on a salary of Rs. 15,000 a month. He joined Daulatrao Shinde at Sabalgad in 1805. He was well received by Raja Mansingh of Jodhpur. But all this was in vain.

Bajirao ordered his confidant Trimbakji Dengale to put down the rebel Chhatrasingh by any means possible. Trimbakji Dengale came to meet him at Malegaon, where Chhatarsingh and his followers were suddenly confined as prisoners in the fort of Malegaon. Chhatarsingh was removed in chain to fort Kongori near Raigad. Here he spent seven years till death put end to his miseries.

on 15 April 1818.

King Shahu II died on 4 May 1808 Vaishakh Shuddha Navami[37] and was succeeded by his son Pratapsinh. Peshwa granted Rs. 25,000 for funeral obsequies of Raja Shahu.[38] Thus, the regime of Shahu ended in the confinement of Peshwa Madhavrao and Bajirao. Shahu-II was a young man of strong build and took to his high position. He had a strong hope for improving the lot of his family and serving the Maratha state so far as it lay in his power. But he was soon deceived, when he discovered that his accession to the Chhatrapati's throne had made it miserable at Satara. In the long regime of Nana Phadnis he and his royal family were completely imprisoned at Satara fort. Nana Phadnis curtailed the allowances of the royal family and imposed further restriction upon them. Raja was not permitted to collect revenue, or given any Saranjams in his authority.[39] In any case, whenever there was any marriage ceremony or funeral obsequies the allowance was sanctioned by Poona government. In the marriage ceremony, his sister did not get on those occasions the customary presents of Karavli Paan.[40] Therefore, a new Inam of 60 Bighas was sanctioned in all.

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32 Khare, - Raste, it must be noted, had been trying to secure the release of Bhau.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

RESTORATION OF THE CHHATRAPATI, 1818

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Raja Shahu-II had three sons from his Rani Anandibai. Pratapsinh was born on 18 January 1792, Ramchandra Bhausaheb in 1795, and Shahaji Appasaheb in 1805. Pratapsinha was crowned soon after his father's death on 10 May 1808. Like his father he also spent his early life as a prisoner of Peshwa. Bajirao-II saw to it that Pratapsinh did not receive good and proper education.[1] Two men, Kashi Shivram Bendre and Visajipant Keluskar, were appointed by the Peshwa to keep a watch on the activities of Raja Shahu-II. They made every attempt to see that the Raja did not get a teacher to teach Pratapsinh. Moreover, nobody came forward to teach the son of Chhatrapati because of Peshwa's fear.

Anandibai, the Rani of Shahu, made every arrangement for her son's education. It was true that Pratapsinh did not get formal education from the teacher appointed for that purpose; but his mother taught him some knowledge of administration of the State. He was trained in riding. She did this work during the late hours in the night[2] so that Peshwa and his men did not notice their activities.

One English writer points out -

"The queen mother managed her horse with great dexterity. She bore the trance of great beauty; wore a rich dress of embroidered muslin. She did not conceal her face and was both familiar and talkative with such officers as approached her. She had none of that timidity, which one naturally supposed to belong to Hindu ladies. In short she appeared to be a woman possessed of much natural ability and great presence of mind. She was intelligent and beautiful".[3]

Raja Pratapsinh was crowned on 16 May 1808 at Satara. The Peshwa and Trimbakji Dengle personally attended Pratapsinh's coronation. Peshwa had granted Rs. 8,000 for Raja's coronation ceremony and 100 shots were fired from canon to celebrate that occasion which was ordered by Bajirao-II.[4] Raja was installed on the throne under the name of Shahu Maharaj.[5] The marriage ceremony of the new Chhatrapati followed.[6] On 17 May 1808 Pratapsinh married Ambikabai, the daughter of Ratanrao Kuturkar. Peshwa Bajirao sanctioned more than 17,000 rupees for the occasion of the royal marriage and some other ceremonies. When a Nazarana and other presents were offered to him, silencing his kettle-drums and Nagaras as he came near Chhatrapati's palaces.

The Peshwa approached the Chhatrapati in full Darbar in deep humility, with nacked feet and with

his kerchief and touched the feet of Chhatrapati with his forehead as loyal humble servant. When after the coronation the Chhatrapati was taken in a ceremonial procession, the Peshwa seated in the 'Khawaskhana' behind him held the 'Morchel', the insignia of royalty over his head.[7] He personally looked into the affairs of the Chhatrapati, and ordered new buildings to be constructed for him in a more convenient place and increased the number of attendants.[8] The coronation ceremony of Pratapsinh was performed in accordance with the 'Puranokt Mantras'[9] which was ordered by Peshwa Bajirao-II. Maisaheb could not oppose the Peshwa.

The relations of the Peshwa with the Chhatrapati Pratapsinh and his mother were of perfect amity and goodwill during the first few years. There are many letters from the Chhatrapati's mother,[10] who managed the administration on behalf of minor Pratapsinh, who was only 15 years old. Their relation reflects entire gratification and appreciation at the attention, the Peshwa paid to their wishes. Bajirao-II granted the exemption from the taxes and customs duties, and sometimes a small pension in the form of land was granted to his servant and relatives. He had granted more privy purse to Chhatrapati than to Shahus-II.[11] After the treaty of Bassein he was expected to support him in establishing

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his authority over all the Maharashtra State.

Peshwa also wished that the Chhatrapati should remain only the nominal head of the state and real authority should vest in the hands of the Peshwa. Correspondence is available between Bajirao and Maisaheb from which it can be concluded that the relations between them were quite normal upto 1812. Bajirao succeeded in capturing Chatursinh in 1812. This event adversely affected the existing relations between the royal family of Satara and Bajirao-II. Consequently, Chhatrapati Pratapsinh alongwith his family was confined in the fort of Satara, from 1812 to 1818. A number of Yadis are also available which reveal after 1812, complaints were often made by Chhatrapati to Peshwa Bajirao-II about non-fulfilment of the needs of the royal family.[12] Trimbakji Dengle was appointed as administrator to watch the movements of the Chhatrapati at Satara.[13] He had appointed many other persons for watching the Raja because Peshwa was suspected of carrying on the negotiations with the British. At this very time Elphinstone arrived in Maharashtra and received permanent charge of his post in 1811. Peshwa's trouble started from this event because he could not keep himself away from the British.

Maisaheb, "an intelligent lady, a woman of talent and address, possessing good manners and good qualities"

made a plan with the help of the British to release Raja of Satara from the custody of Peshwa. Chhatrapati had no power to take any decision in the administrative matters, though Peshwa was his servant.

Poona Government:

Peshwa Bajirao could not keep the British away from Poona by refusing to sign the treaty of Bassein in 1802. The treaty of Bassein proved responsible for the downfall of the Maratha power. Because this treaty paved the way for direct British interference in Maratha politics. The years between 1803 and 1818 covering the remaining regime of Bajirao, are full of incidents and circumstances. The traditional position of the Peshwa entitled him to exercise control over all the members of the Maratha State. The representative of the British government left this point in the state of ambiguity perhaps deliberately. There was no occasion to define the Peshwa's position with reference to the other members. As soon as Bajirao returned to his capital under British protection in 1803, he expected support in establishing his authority. Bajirao's action in accepting British protection produced, throughout Maharashtra, a general resentment and unrest.

In the internal administration, the Peshwa was

likewise not free to exercise his authority uncontrolled over his immediate subordinate chiefs. The Pratinidhi, the Raja of Kolhapur, and of Sawant of Wadi were a few others whose relations with the Peshwa were more or less of an uncertain nature. He had no courage openly to declare his hostility to the British government. The Peshwa had to make constant appeals to the British Residents to punish his supposed wrong-doers. There was an example of his evil administration.

The Pratinidhi of Aundh was a man of irascible temper and vicious habits. Peshwa had deprived him of all his property and lands and transferred them to his captain Bapu Gokhale. In the struggle of internal dispute Pratinidhi declared that he was the servant of the Chhatrapati and not of Peshwa who had usurped Chhatrapati's power.

After the treaty of Bassein Bajirao lost his possession outside Maharashtra; he made it up by gaining stabilityat Poona. Now Peshwa had no more need for the service of the Jahagirdars like the Patwardhans, the Panases, the Desais of Nipani etc.. He appointed Bapu Gokhale as chief commaner of his troops; this created internal enmity between them. Peshwa Bajirao was unable to solve the problem. At last Elphinstone held personal discussion with the Jahagirdars. At Pandharpur in 1812 the award was signed under severe pressure

by the Peshwa alongwith the chiefs that were present. In this settlement Peshwa Bajirao did not make fresh demands and the British government reserved the right of making any separate treaty with Jahagirdars of Chhatrapatis. Thus, Bajirao was weakened by the treaty.

One evil method introduced by Bajirao in his revenue administration was that of auctioning the business of collecting taxes to the highest bidder. This measure he adopted in order to amass money, and at the same time provide lucrative work to his own favourites in service. This method proved ruinous to all classes. At this time, Bajirao's friction with the British began to increase and a war appeared probable sooner or later. Gangadhar Shastri arrived in Poona, as an ambassador of Baroda to adjust the latter's dispute with the Peshwa. Peshwa appointed Trimbakji Dengle on his behalf to deal with Shastri's mission. He enjoyed his master's full confidence. Trimbakji's people murdered Gangadhar Shastri and created a fresh problem.

The new treaty was imposed on the Peshwa known as 'Poona Treaty' on 19 July 1812. The important political feature of the treaty was the disavowal of Peshwa's permanent right as the head of the Maratha confideracy. Peshwa Bajirao could never reconcile himself to this new situation and ultimately he was prompted to take the extreme step of war.

Chhatrapati's Movement:

The Bajirao Peshwa's administration created complications in the Maratha state, which gave the opportunity to the British. The murder of Gangadhar Shastri sealed the fate of the Maratha State and every man began to look for the safety of his own position.

Elphinstone was eager to uproot the Peshwa and his seat of power. He had systematically supported the disgruntled elements in the Maratha state against the Peshwa. He could use the weapon to hit the Peshwa. The Satara court was already planning against the Peshwa. Raja had not received his expenses from Peshwa, such as payment of his servants, his own privy purse, new recruitment for the security of Satara fort.[14] Raja's friends like Rango Bapuji Gupte, Balwant Malhar Chitnis and Dajiba Upadhye made plan with the help of Maisaheb and Swami of Chaphal to release Chhatrapati.[15] They were aspiring to overthrow the Peshwa at Poona and take control of the administration of the Maratha State in the name of Chhatrapati. Balvantrao Chitnis and Rango Bapuji were deadly against the Peshwa. They approached Elphinstone for aid against the Peshwa for restoration of power to the Chhatrapati. It was hoped that they would get back their Jagir with the help of the British.[16]

Secret letters at the instance of Chitnis seeking British aid were despatched to Elphinstone via Mahad through Narasu Kakade, the confidential messenger of the Chhatrapati. Elphinstone found this as an opportunity and responded favourably. Balawantrao personally met Elphinstone. He pleaded that it was Chhatrapati who was real and rightful head of the Maratha Raj.[17]

"That the Peshwa is one of the Raja's servants who after having been entrusted with the government, had possessed himself of a large force and begun to rule over him and the country pretending that he himself was only the faithful servant of government, and with whom were all His Highness' servants in similar rank of power".[18]

Raja Pratapsinh was fully aware of the difference between the British and the Peshwa government. But the Peshwa came to know of the treacherous contacts of the Chhatrapati with Elphinstone through his secret agents. The only way that was open to the Peshwa was to wean the Chhatrapati away from the influence of Elphinstone.

The Peshwa did his best to win over the Chhatrapati by all possible means for the Maratha cause. During his stay at Mahuli he visited the latter, and persuaded him to come and stay at Mahuli. There he moved the

Chhatrapati by respectful attention and entertainments. He had confessed with perfect candour that the Chhatrapati was the real master of Maratha Rāj, and pleading guilty for the wrongs that might have been inflicted by the Peshwa. The Peshwa promised that after freeing the nation from the British, he would hand over the reins of administration. To draw him away from Elphinstone's influence Peshwa took the Chhatrapati and his mother in his confidence. He explained to him the plan that he was finalising against the enemy.[19] He also desired to create an impression on the Maratha chief that Chhatrapati of the Empire will have to struggle against the English.[20] He hoped that an action would compel Maratha chiefs to extend their best support and co-operation in his war against the British.[21] During their stay at Mahuli the Peshwa also secured the consent of the Chhatrapati to the proposal, that the latter with his family members and near dependents should, for greater safety and security, reside at stronghold of Wasota.[22] By this move the Peshwa must have hoped to render the communication of Chhatrapati with Elphinstone msore difficult. Bajirao also pressed into his service the old discarded diplomats such as Govindrao Kale, Anyaba Mehandale, Dada Gadre etc. for his position.

As soon as Peshwa left Mahuli, Chhatrapati hastened

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his Chitnis to Elphinstone and revealed the plans of the Peshwa to him.[23] Chitnis expressed his view and negotiations were opened between Chitnis and British authority. The private communication and an assurance of the performance of this business were received and British authority was guided by law. British suggesteds to Chitnis to be cautious that Peshwa did not thwart the plan when he hears of it.[24] Balajipant Natu was the examiner of the document who ascertained the validity and arrangement to their satisfaction. Trimbakji Dengle watched every movement of Chhatrapati and informed Peshwa about political situation at Satara.[25] One day Trimbakji Dengle proceeded with 25 Sepoys and attacked the Chitnis Wada, when Chitnis and Natu were engaged in preparing the measures and documents. The enemies were forcing the door open and they escaped from over the compound wall of the Wada. Elphinstone, who was manoeuvring an early outbreak, arranged that the Chhatrapati should desert the Peshwa and join the British at the first available opportunity.[26] Thereafter the Chhatrapati maintained a show of goodwill towards the Peshwa and continued his contacts with Elphinstone.

Elphinstone had made extremely efficient network of spy system. The most eminent among such contemptible individuals, who rendered valuable service to Elphinstone was Balajipant Natu.[27] He had the most potent weapon

in the hands of Elphinstone to destroy the Peshwa. The Peshwa perhaps was shocked because of the treachery of his chiefs, and he was waiting for the arrival of his Southern chiefs Patwardhan and others who reached Poona and began preparing for the offensive. Bajirao selected Bapu Gokhale as his chief commander, and put a crore of Rupees for creating an efficient army. The British seized the opportunity and operated against the Peshwa's own troops. The fearless advance of the British troops immediately destroyed Maratha confidence. Though Gokhale encouraged the Maratha chiefs for this, the battle was lost. Patwardhan advised Peshwa not to leave the capital. The victors were sure to enter the capital and hence Bajirao-II alongwith his guns and valuables left Poona in the direction of Satara. On the same day British had hoisted the British flag on the Shaniwar Wada on 17 November, 1817.

After this Bapu Gokhale turned to protect the fugitive Peshwa, who proceeded via Jejuri. On 19 November 1817 Peshwa was at Padali. From there via Mahuli he came to Pusesawaly where he joined Appa Desai with his army. Peshwa despatched Naro Apte to fetch the Chhatrapati from fort of Wasota to his camp.[28] Peshwa learnt that British force had arrived at river Krishna; he turned via Phaltan towards Pandharpur. On 12 December 1817 he reached Siddhtek on river Bhima where Naro

Apte, with Chhatrapati, his mother and two brothers joined him.[29] After Chhatrapati was brought to the battle-field, the information was sent to British. Bajirao's army was suffering defeat. Bajirao was obliged to beg to British that he was only a servant of Maharaja.

The English government began to occupy all the forts and country. Provision was made for the Satara Chhatrapati inland, and also for Chimanaji and other members of the Peshwa family, who were not seriously implicated in the war. Elphinstone had created the impression that he was only trying to restore Chhatrapati his old position. General Smith attacked Satara and besieged Satara on 10 February 1818. The fort was surrendered to the British the same evening after receiving a few shells. The Killedar agreed to surrender the fort on his being permitted to march away with his garrison. Smith gave the account to Elphinstone:

"Satara is strong and as the ancient seat of Maratha Empire, carries great consequence with it in the estimation and prejudices of the native and may, therefore, prove of greater value in the war against the Peshwa than in its mere local importance ... the Raja's flag was hoisted there yesterday noon agreeable to your instruction and his palace and property have been preserved for him".[30]

Satara Proclamation:

On 11 February 1818 the 'Bhagawa Zenda' the flag of the Chhatrapati was raised on the fort, to mean that British restored the Chhatrapati of Satara.[31] The same day gathering of the Chhatrapati's relations, officials like Vithhal Purandare, Khanderao Raje Shirke etc. and eminent citizens was organised by Elphinstone where Natu was present. In that the robes of the honour were distributed to the Chhatrapati's Sardars; and proclamation was issued which was circulated throughout Maharashtra: "The Raja of Satara, who is now a prisoner in Bajeeraw's hands will be released and placed at the head of an independent sovereignty, of such an extent as may maintain the Raja and his family in comfort and dignity. With this view the fort of Satara has been taken, the Raja's flag has been set up in it, and his former ministers have been called into employment. Whatever country is assigned to the Raja will be administered by him".[32]

In the proclamation British government declared that Peshwa had illegally appropriated Chhatrapati's power and authority. They declared that government was compelled to take military measures to drive the Peshwa from his dominion. All Watans and Inams, Warshasans, all religious and charitable establishments would be

continued and protected. The customs will be maintained as far as they were just and reasonable. People were enjoined not to pay revenue to the Peshwa, and all his adherents, watandars, jahagirdars and other officers were called upon to desert the Peshwa and to return to their native places within two months.[33] The farming system was to be abolished. Officers were to be appointed to collect a regular and moderate revenue on behalf of the English.

Satara proclamation is the finest example of British chicanery and deceit. It was also a master stroke of coming diplomacy on the part of Elphinstone. The proclamation of Satara aimed at throwing dust in the eyes of the Maratha chiefs and the general public regarding the British intention and moves. British wanted to damn the Peshwa by painting him as an unscrupulous usurper of Chhatrapati's legitimate authority. It was intended to eradicate from the public mind all respect, goodwill and loyalty that Marathas entertained for the Peshwa and to establish a counterpoise to his influence and power. They created a shadowy sovereign authority of the Chhatrapati of Satara. The measures were also calculated to serve as a vail of selflessness, justice, uprightness and fairplay behind which could very well lie hidden their imperialistic aims. The proclamation proved the most potent and deadly

weapon the British used from their diplomatic armoury against the Maratha Empire. Chhatrapati of Satara had already made a plan with British to free from Peshwa's harassment.[34]

After this proclamation Chhatrapati joined the English as against the Peshwa. He had not known about Peshwa's intrigue against the British. No sooner had the echoes of the proclamation of Satara died down than the Phadnis of Satara hastened to despatch Narsu Kakade to acquaint the Chhatrapati with the new developments. Thereupon Balwantrao Chitnis promptly contacted Smith at Aklus. He requested him to attack the Peshwa force only during the day-time, so that the Chhatrapati's defection from the Peshwa rank may be facilitated. Peshwa was struggling against the enemy for his independence.

The fall of Satara and the subsequent proclamation proved turning point for the Peshwa. Peshwa became helpless and turned to the south with an intention of giving a decisive battle. Chhatrapati was the only person for him to maintain his position and prestige. When Bapu Gokhale received message through his informers about Smith's probable approach, the Peshwa beseeched the Chhatrapati to speed up so as to escape seizure by the enemy. The Peshwa, who well knew the British intrigue with Chhatrapati, perhaps realised the motive

behind the latter's attitude. He again sent Balwantrao and Shyamrao Raste praying the King to march on. But Chhatrapati, on the pretext of his mother not having come up, lingered and refused to move.[85] As the Peshwa left and as the British soldiers came close the Chhatrapati's Chitnis met the British General. The British divisions allowed the Peshwa no rest. At Ashti Bapu Gokhale was overtaken by General Smith and was killed in a stiff action on 19 February 1818. This was the last stage of the war because with the death of his commander Peshwa lost all hopes of recovering his position. Chhatrapati Pratapsinh alongwith his mother and brothers fell into the British hands and joined the British.[36]

The battle of Ashti marked the end of rule of Peshwa Bajirao-II. The Peshwa lost all hopes of recovering his position and his Jagirdars came to the same conclusion. In the Peshwa's camp the Patwardhans were first to desert him.[37] Therefore, after this battle they submitted and sent their respective envoys to Munro asking for an agreement. Thomas Munro issued the famous proclamation declaring the criminality of Bajirao and deposing him from his position as the head of Maratha government. The Pratinidhi also sent his offer of submission. The Pant Sachiv also submitted. Pant Amatya and brother-in-law of Peshwa surrendered to the British alongwith the fortress. The surrender of Bajirao-II destroyed

all hopes among the Maratha confederacy. One of the most important outcomes of the battle of Ashti was the liberation of Chhatrapati of Satara and his family from the Peshwa's captivity. "British India Advocate" the contemporary Anglo-Marathi journal expressed the view regarding the rescue of Pratapsinh from Peshwa's custody in the following words:

> *The rescue of the Raja or rather his giving himself to us at the battle of Ashti terminated the Deccan war. The tributary chiefs of the Maratha Empire owed obedience to Bajirao; the Peshwa only in so far as he was the organ of the Raja. Our victory at Ashti owed its importance not to the gallant action or to the defeat of the Peshwa, or to death of Gokhale, but our good fortune in obtaining the person of the Raja.*[38]

Bajirao surrendered to the British on 3 June 1818 bringing the story of Maratha statehood to an end. Bajirao-II was exiled from Maharashtra and was given a pension of Rs. 8 lakhs and was asked to reside at Bithur on the bank of Ganga. The proposition made to Bajirao was accepted by him.[39] Mountstuart Elphinstone was a clever statesman. He very shrewdly used this event for the advantage of the British rule in Maharashtra. He was undoubtedly the chief architect of the consolidation of the British power in Western India.

His role in the British victory over the Marathas in the third Anglo-Maratha war was very vital.

After this Killedar had surrendered the fort Chandan-Wandan, Nadgiri and the village of Wai. The British division marched to Wasota which is 15 miles from Satara. General pitzler took possession of fort Parali and forts around Satara. On 7 May 1818 Shivaji's capital Raigad was surrendered to the British and with this Maratha Raj came to an end.

Chhatrapati's Restoration:

British captured Satara and Satara fort on the 10th of February 1818 and declared their intention to restore Pratapsinh to his ancestral position. At the battle of Ashti Chhatrapati alongwith his mother fell into the hands of the English. Chhatrapati was walking with them and the British cavalry accompanied them with their retinue. General Smith wrote to Elphinstone:

"I send you a private account of our good luck as the Raja's family is with us. I entreat you to relieve me of the Raja's family as I cannot keep up any useful pursuit with them".

Elphinstone came to pay his visit to the Maharaja and said, the Maharaja will be administrator of his

empire. We will expell Bajirao from his residence in the country, Chhatrapati was owner of the Empire. After this Chhatrapati was rescued from the captivity of the Peshwa Pratapsinh and Elphinstone exchanged cordial visits at Belsar near Saswad on 4 March 1818.[40] In that meeting Elphinstone was accompanied by James Grant Duff, Gen. Smith, Russel, Bilimore and Balajipant Natu. Elphinstone for the first time met Raja and his family. In this respect he writes:

> *The Raja is about 20 years of age and seems frank and good humoured, not destitute of intelligence. His two brothers are still more prepossessing in their appearance and his mother seems to be a woman of some talents and address. They observe all the Eastern sovereignty, neither rising on the entrance of strangers nor returning salutes.*[41]

Thereafter Gen. Pritzler took charge of the Raja on 9 March 1818 and towards the end of the month the Raja escorted by Elphinstone and General Pritzler left for Satara. Raja preferred postponing his formal entry until the expiration of the present month, which is considered as inauspicious by the Hindus. On 10 April, 1818 the Raja entered his capital in procession with pomp of a prince and delight of a school boy.[42] Then Pratapsinh formally ascended the throne of Satara in

full 'Darbar' on April 10, 1818.[43] The Raja and his brothers mounted upon elephants, went in procession through the town. When he dismounted at the places, three or four sheeps were killed and a quantity of holy water was poured out. A pavalion or mandap had been raised in the court of the palace. The Raja ascended the throne of Shivaji and then rose water was sprinkled and flowers distributed. Later, Elphinstone and his party took their leave. The next day the Raja paid him a visit. Elphinstone gave presents of jewels and cloth to the Raja, his brothers and his retinue.[44] On the 12th of April, 1818 several proclamations were issued speaking of the friendship between Company's government and the Raja. On 13 April, Raja Pratapsinh gave a banquet in honour of Elphinstone and honoured him by giving jewels and cloths. A diamond ring was presented by Raja's mother Maisaheb to Elphinstone on his leaving Satara.[45]

Elphinstone appointed Captain James Grant an army officer on his own staff as the collector and political agent of Satara. He played a prominent part in the later war and was present in all the three battles. Grant's task was more difficult than that of other collectors. He had to lead the Raja into the ways of the British administrative practice.Elphinstone instructed

him that the Raja's flag might be hoisted in the villages and that it might also be explained to the inhabitants that they were the Raja's subjects. Further Elphinstone added, "... it will be proper to impress on them as well as on the Raja that it is not intended to revive even in the name of Empire of Seevajee". Grant was to secure Raja's goodwill, but he was to make it quite clear that the authority of the British government was in reality supreme. 'Otherwise', he said, "the machine we are setting up will be liable to be turned against us".

The Raja immediately issued a proclamation announcing his friendly relations with the British government and revealing the particular ill treatment that he had been meted out by Bajirao-II. On 14 April, 1818 a proclamation was issued in his name from Satara. It declared:

> *Bajirao had placed ourselves and families under restraint and according to information received from his Kamdar, he had it in contemplation to put us to death. But a regard for a condition of the last Maharaja promoted them to release us from the custody of Bajirao, and replaced us on the throne, with every demonstration of consideration.*[46]

Though the Raja was installed on 10 April 1818

a treaty of 'Perpetual friendship and alliance' was concluded on 25 September 1819. Raja Pratapsinh made over the entire powers to the British Resident for the proper organisation of his state establishment till such time, as he and his officers developed full acquaintance with those novel machines of administration and had collected substantial revenue for self-propelled sufficiency.[47]

Thus, Pratapsinh came on the Gadi of Satara with the help of the British and their resident in Poona, Mountstuart Elphinstone. But Elphinstone shrewdly kept the reigns of administration of Satara state in British hands. He told Pratapsinh that the British are interested only in destroying the authority of rebellious Peshwa Bajirao-II and they would install Pratapsinh on the Gadi of Satara. Elphinstone described -

> *The Bombay government's aim in setting up a small state of Satara ruled by Raja Pratapsinh was to afford an honourable maintenance to the representative of the ancient princes of this cosuntry, and to establish among the Marathas a counterpoise to the remaining influence of the former Brahmin government.*[48]

The British Government ceded the territory of Satara to the Raja in perpetual sovereignty. And the British Proclamation was issued by Mr Elphinstone.

Raja's restoration was done on the assumption that this principality was subordinate to the British Empire. That no adopted heir could succeed to the throne of any state in India without the previous approval of the British government. Raja of Satara was not a subject of British government nor a dependent upon it in any sense of the word. It was that he agreed to hold his dominions not in suburdination to the British government but in 'subordinate co-operation' with the British government. The restoration of the Raja was in fact the pivot upon which all these arrangements moved. It was confessedly through the medium of the Raja's restoration that they hoped to arrest the war raging to conciliate the Maratha people and reconcile them to the change then about to take place in their condition.

The creation of Satara as independent state was no act of generosity. It was diplomatic move. It had served a purpose to part the Brahmins from the Marathas, to cripple the Peshwa by destroying his Maratha support. This could be easily done by reviving the House of Shivaji by replacing in a mushroom kingdom of Bhosale of Satara.

Raja's authority under the treaty was to be increased only by slow degree on the ground of the perverse influence with which he was surrounded. Report

of Satara by John Briggs says -

> *British Government transferred the whole management into the Raja's hand. In Deccan proportionate defalcations of revenue were everywhere felt added to which the calamity, the want of forage in the hot weather. The Raja took to business under captain Grant Duff is truly surprising and steadiness with which he pursues the system laid down by him is highly creditable. He usually attends his office daily at about eleven or twelve O'clock, hear all complaints with secretaries and takes decision with the help of Governor General.*

The restoration of Chhatrapati may be under the control of British Government. But it was better than Peshwa's harassment.

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EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

Shivaji was the founder of the house of Chhatrapati. Shivaji fought with Mughals in the north and Bijapuri Sultans in the South and carved out an independent kingdom of his own, out of his small Jagir of Poona. He had rare gifted qualities of winning the heart of common people, who became the basis of his Swarajya, i.e., Kingdom. He was a great military genius and diplomat and above all a man of creative ability. He coronated himself on 6 June 1674 and declared to the world that he was no longer a Jahagirdar but an independent sovereign ruler. Shivaji also founded his own administrative institution, known as 'Ashta Pradhan Mandal', the new system of military and civil administration. This system was based on regular payment to the officers and soldiers. They were also not hereditary. The continued in their respective position as long as they carried on their duties well. He discontinued the practice of conferring lands, jagirs, saranjams on the officers including his ministers. His ministers were his advisers and remained in the office as long as they enjoyed his confidence. The function of Shivaji's council was merely advisory. All disciplinary authority finally rested in him. Chhatrapati represented sovereignty both in

theory and practice. Thus, in Shivaji's time Chhatrapati was sthe fountain of final authority of all sources of power.

After Shivaji's death his elder son Sambhaji became Chhatrapati. There were two parties in the court - one supported Sambhaji and another supported Rajaram, the younger son of Shivaji for succession. Therefore Sambhaji started his career in rough weather. Meanwhile, Aurangzeb's son Prince Akbar having been overrun by Rajputs, rebelled against his father and sought asylum with Maratha King. Had Sambhaji been a diplomat and man of ability like his father, he would have taken advantage of open rebellion of Akbar. But Sambhaji, this time was facing difficulty at home and also was fighting the Mughals and Siddis. Aurangzeb descended down to Deccan. He succeeded in capturing Sambhaji and putting him to death in 1689.

Sambhaji followed his father's administrative system during his regime. He maintained the policy of Chhatrapati Shivaji as sole decision-maker and sovereign ruler. In spite of Ashta Pradhan, Chandogamatya, a special post was created by him for Kavi Kalash. Due to Sambhaji's personal relations with Kavi Kalash, all the former's decisions were inflouenced by the latter as Sambhaji consulted him on all matters. Kavi Kalash united people when officers marched against

Sambhaji in 1685. He executed the order of justice, administrative decisions etc.[1] Kvi Kalash, thus, established his mastery over the administration and influenced Sambhaji. Otherwise, in all matters of administration Sambhaji strictly followed the policy of his father. He did not allow anybody to overpower the authority of the Chhatrapati. The cruel way in which he was put to death by Aurangzeb, and the heroic way in which he embraced the death helped arousing the national spirit of the people in Maharashtra. The new post Chandogamatya was not continued after his death.

Sarkar says:

> *In this dearth of talent at the Maratha court and camp, Kavi Kalash's ability shone more conspicuously and his predominance became naturally unrivalled, while Sambhaji's affairs in the outline parts of his dominions suffered from the lack of competent agents on the spot. The evil was aggravated by fresh conspiracies against the King which were inevitably followed by the execution or at least imprisonment of more Maratha generals and ministers of leading position.*[2]

After the cruel death of Sambhaji by Aurangzeb, Rajaram, the second son of Shivaji was proclaimed as Chhatrapati on the 9th of November 1689 as Sambhaji's son Shahu was a minor. In fact Aurangzeb thought that

the Maratha monarchy was over, but Maratha leaders took solemn oath of remaining faithful to Chhatrapati and carried on warfare in his name. However, the fall of Raigad - Maratha capital - and capturing of Yesubai and her small son Shahu, marked a severe stroke on Maratha leadership. Rajaram escaped to Jinji, leaving Ramchandra Pant Amatya in Maharashtra. He was in charge of Maratha government. Under his watchful supervision the war continued for seventeen years for liberating the country from enemy's possession. The notable Maratha generals like Dhanaji Jadhav, Santaji Ghorpade, Khando Ballal were fighting against the Mughals, sometimes in the open battles, sometimes with the 'Ganimi Kava' (guerilla warfare). Maratha harassed the Mughals by cutting supplies and starving them. In the meantime Rajaram created Jinji his new capital and conducted affairs from there. He created central government, that is, Ashta Pradhan Mandal. But he did not take any decision independently. He had delegated his authority to two Brahmin officers - Prallahad Niraji and Ramchandra Pant Amatya. Pratinidhi, a new post, was created for Prallahad Niraji and another new post, Hukumat-Panah for Ramchandra Pant Amatya. Chhatrapati's views and decisions were represented by them.

In the period of Rajaram extra-ordinary situation was created by Mughal invasion in Maharashtra. There

arose the problem of controlling and directing the war efforts in the Maratha country. The very important notable change in order to face the situation was the plan of decentralising sovereign power and establishing centres of power at various places. They established additional centres under the trusted and competent men, such as Ramchandra Pant at Vishalgad. In the Karnatak the supreme power of Chhatrapati was exercised by Pratinidhi Pralhad Niraji. The competent officers exercised their pressure all over the Maratha country and they carried the Maratha administration with the approval of Rajaram. Aurangzeb started encouraging Maratha generals to go to his side by giving Saranjams and Jagirs. Bhimsen saxena remarked: "Among the Marathas not much union was seen. Every one called himself a Sardar and set out to raid and plunder".[3] Therefore, Rajaram profusely distributed the lands and watans and had the desired effect.

In the period of Rajaram, 1689-1700 the love for watan increased among the Marathas. The Marathas became more unruly and their love for their homeland was subordinate to their love for the watan. Secondly, the delegation of authority led to the growth of mutual jealousy and rivalry among the Marathas - even among the Ministers of Ashta Pradhans.

The death of Aurangzeb (1707) marked a distinct break between the old order that was passing away and the new, that was growing. Prince Shahu, who was in the captivity of Aurangzeb, was released by Zulfiqar Khan for keeping the Marathas divided by domestic feud. Tarabai was the administrator of Maratha state and she declared Shahu as an imposter. This was the invitation to civil war between Shahu and Tarabai, the queen of Rajaram. In the battle of Khed in 1708 Shahu showed his superiority and coronated himself at Satara on 12 January 1708. Shahu strengthened the position of newly created Chhatrapati, i.e., himself. He defeated the internal and external enemies. Shahu secured the sanads from the Mughal Emperor in 1719 which have him the authority to collect °Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the Deccani Subhas.

Balaji Vishvanath rendered a signal service to Shahu in strengthening his position. Therefore Shahu appointed him as his Peshwa. After Balaji's death his son Bajirao was appointed as Balaji's successor in 1720. Bajirao was a great warrior and he strengthened the royal authority by eliminating opposition. The Nizam, who had a peculiar attraction for the Deccan, was appointed as Viceroy, and complication was created between Nizam and Marathas. Nizam resumed his friendship

with Sambhaji of Kolhapur, Chandrasen and the Maratha nobles.[4] Nizam was studiously cautious in carrying out his designs against Shahu. Afterwards Nizam was defeated twice - once at Palkhed in 1727, and again at Bhopal in 1736. Bajirao under the authority of raja Shahu spread Maratha Raj in the north and south.

Though Bajirao was obedient to Shahu he often pursued his policy independently. He ruthlessly put down some of the Sardars of the Maratha court. For example, he killed Senapati Dabhade in the battle of Dabhai. The independent actions of Bajirao, without reference to Shahu, were not pleasing to him. Shahu reprimanded Bajirao by summoning him to the court at Satara.

Warana Treaty between Kolhapur and Satara ended the long drawn dispute between Satara and Kolhapur. The Treaty subordinated Kolhapur to Satara in all respects but name. It marked a distinct advance in the authority of Shahu within his territories and guaranteed his position from intermittant exposures to the sidewinds of civil strife. In the eyes of his own people as much as in those of the aliens he appeared to be the real 'Chhatrapati' now. He was deeply imbued with love of self glory though he was also deeply loyal to his chief Shahu and to the cause of his country. Under the control of Raja Shahu he expanded the Maratha power.

After the death of Bājirao Peshwa (1740), Shahu invited Bajirao's eldest son Nanasaheb to receive the robes of Peshwaship. Nanasaheb's succession to office was not secured without opposition. Raghuji Bhosale of Nagpur supported Babaji Naik for Peshwaship. This created controversy between Raghuji and Peshwa. Raghuji accepted the title Sena-Saheb-Subha in 1727 and extended his Jagir in the eastern India and Gondavan. By pushing his frontiers to the borders of Malwa, he came into conflict with the Peshwa. He had become, of late, so arrogant that he had not only defied the authority of Bajirao but had treated even Shahu with scant courtesy.[4] While these transactions were drawing to a close, there came alarming news from Satara. Shahu had his last phase and had fallen ill and he had been fast sinking in health for some time. Raghuji Bhosale had started for Satara, and his presence at such a critical situation would be injurious to his interests and to the security of the country. For, if Shahu expired, his son Mudhoji might be adopted by Sagunabai. But the question of succession was not solved in his life time. Shahu died on 15 December 1749.

Transfer of Power:

After becoming Chhatrapati Shahu created his own central government. But to hold his own position

against his rivals he made many changes in the administrative system. When Balaji Vishwanath got Peshwaship, it marked the beginning of the transfer of power from Chhatrapati to Peshwa.

Balaji Vishvanath is regarded as the saviour of Shahu's Raj. He stabilized Shahu's position by crushing the chieftains like Damaji Thorat, Krishnarao Khatavkar, Udaji Chavan, Ravrambha Nimbalkar. Balaji next adopted a diplomacy that re-established the government. He also negotiated with the Mughal court at Delhi and brought sandads for Swarajya, Chauthai and Sardeshmukhi. In this crisis Shahu, though full of personal courage, lacked qualities of military leadership and depended upon his loyal Peshwa.

Balaji Vishvanath's motives were not unselfish. His advise was dictated by personal interest. He wanted to increase the material resources and power of his family. Balaji requested Shahu that he should be given the best post out of the eight posts of the council.[5] Shahu, in accordance with the promise already made to Balaji, appointed Balaji Vishvanath to newly created the post of 'Senakarte' on 24 December 1708. This made enmity between Balaji and Chandrasen Jadhav, who was appointed as Senapati. In this crisis Shahu supported Balaji Vishvanath against Senapati. Thus, Maratha chieftains were not loyal to either Shahu or Tarabai but actuated

more by self interest. Shahu had started delegating his sovereign authority with the help of Balaji Vishvanath. The clever and useful Balaji taking advantage of the situation, first set aside Senapati and then Pratinidhi and made himself the biggest of them. His chief source of strength was the great trust and confidence reposed by Shahu in him. He made Balaji the Peshwa on 17 November, 1713.

He must have known that the hereditary Jagir system would lead to the hereditary office. So, he not only created feudatory system but hereditary office also. The treaty between Balaji and Kanhoji Angre had the first germs of this system. When Shahu's position became stronger, he granted fresh Jagirs to deserving captains or confirmed obedient ones' Jagirs. Peshwa was the biggest Jagirdar and became superior to them. When Mughal sanad, Swarajya, Chauthai and Sardeshmukhi were granted, Balaji made arrangement for revenue. The result was that the role of the Peshwa was changed from the first minister in the council to that of a deputy of the King. He had been exercising all powers of master with his consent and on his behalf. But the service of Balaji also contained seeds of weakness and disservice. Mr Sinha remarks: "The discredit of having thus undermined the strength of royal authority goes to Balaji Vishvanath".[6]

Bajirao-I, the Peshwa further increased the prestige of the office of the Peshwa by his brilliant victory. His ambition as Peshwa was to regulate the home and foreign policy of the Marathas as the central authority. Bajirao's outstanding qualities and the unshakable confidence of Shahu in him, created his supremacy in Maratha confideracy. Shahu tried to conciliate him at the time of expedition against Nizam, Dabhade, Pratinidhi and Delhi expedition. But Bajirao's self-motivation brought them under his control. Shahu became greatly worried on account of the activities of his Peshwa, but Bajirao did not care for his master. In that period Peshwa created his new sardars like Shinde, Holkar, Pawar and became superior to ministers. There was a tremendous growth in the prestige and influence of Bajirao after the battle of Dabhai and that marked the beginning of the period of de facto rule of Peshwa in the Maratha state. The only opposition to Bajirao's growing power came from Shripatrao Pratinidhi, but he had succeeded in preventing support to Pratinidhi. His real intention was to utilise the enormous popular esteem and prestige and beating down the opposition of his adversaries. Peshwa Bajirao would not tolerate any challenge to his prestige and influence from any members of the Chhatrapati's council. The expansion of Maratha power had enjoyed the highest status and

greatest confidence and this increased power and prestige of the Peshwa. Shahu had the wisdom to allow himself to be guided by an able minister. He was not general and never led the campaign after 1731.

Balaji Bajirao was also successful Peshwa and followed the path of his father. He had made his authority on Maratha confederacy. And Shahu could not find anyone after his dismissal. Peshwa alone was competent to manage the Maratha Empire. In this critical moment, Balaji Bajirao justified king's choice and became superior in the Rajmandal. In this period Chhatrapati Shahu, with advancing age, faced domestic worries, and question of succession. During this period Peshwa was found strong enough controller. The Peshwa became fountain-head of the Maratha Power. Peshwa found opportunity to contact Shahu and obtained two royal rescripts to carry out the responsibility of Raj, and work in cooperation with whoever becomes Chhatrapati. The Peshwa Balaji Bajirao completed the process by his usurpation that came to be legalised by the Chhatrapati himself. After the death of Shahu, Peshwa emerged as the strongest force in the state and exercised the royal authority of the Chhatrapati. Rise of the Peshwa was a political mark in the period of Shahu and significant departure of Shivaji's solidarity of the constitution.

Constitutional Changes:

The second feature of the Shahu's regime was the changes in the constitution of administration. Shahu, immediately after his coronation, had prepared his Ashtapradhan Mandal on the basis of Shivaji's council. But due to the peculiar circumstances, many changes were made in the new council; though each minister had his separate department, he was also military commander. The important change that had been made in Shahu's period was that the councillers became hereditary. Shahu was shrewd judge of men. He appointed Balaji Vishvanath as Peshwa. Balaji Vishvanath, by his ability and statesmanship succeeded in making the Peshwaship hereditary. The most important example of the hereditary office was that of Balaji Vishvanath himself in whose family the office of the Peshwa was permanently confirmed. Similar was the case with all other offices such as the Pratinidhi, amatya, Sachiv, Senapati, Nyayadhish, Panditrao, etc.. The office of the Pratinidhi and the Sachiv and Mantri became hereditary after passing three different families. The office of commander-in-chief became hereditary in the Dabhade family after it had been held by seven or eight chiefs. The result was that excepting the Peshwa's office all other offices were occupied by incompetent men during the second

and third generations. That made the adverse effects on the administration of the state. In the case of Peshwa also the successors to the Peshwa's office, after Madhavrao, proved to be incompetent.[1]

Balaji's motive was not unselfish but this made adverse effect on the remaining Pradhans of the council. After the defection of Senapati Chandrasen Jadhav in 1711, the person appointed to the office of the senapati on the hereditary basis, namely Santaji Jadhav and Mansingh More proved to be incompetent. Khanderao Dabhade was appointed commander-in-chief and received Baglan and Gujarat for his sphere of influence. Ambitious Peshwa's interference in ancestral dominion formed an internal enmity among them. Shahu used his method of conciliation but powerful Peshwa killed Dabhade in the battlefield. Thus Senapati became nominal figure-head in the Rajmandal. In the controversy between Peshwa and Pratinidhi, Pratinidhi was completely humbled. Afterwards Pratinidhi followed the route to cooperation with the internal administration. Actually according to the constitution the Peshwa was smaller functionary than the Pratinidhi whose office was created by Rajaram at Jinji. This dimunition of power of Rajmandal helped to strengthen the ascendency of the Peshwa.

In Shahu's period the post of Amatya or Rajadnya

occupied comparatively subordinate place. In the Rajmandal there were eight sets of officers, namely, Diwan, Mujumdar, Fadnis, Sabnis, Karkhanis, Chitnis, Jamdar and Potnis. These subordinate officers were chosen by the central authority. But in the period of power of the Peshwa, apparently these officers contented themselves with ignoring the usefulness of these offices. Only Fadnis and Majumdar seem to be superior in them and helped the ministers or district commanders. The council of Rajmandal is frequently mentioned as holding Majalis or meeting for the purpose of constitution, adopting measures of state policy, dispensing justice and maintaining the dignity of the state, both at home and abroad. In the regime of Shahu the great council meeting where Bajirao advocated the forward policy of marching up to Delhi was held and opposed by the Pratinidhi. Afterwards, no discussion took place in the Rajmandal.

"The predominance acquired by the Peshwa by reason of the great services rendered by them necessarily tended to diminish the importance of the other members of the council".[7]

In that transitional period most notable change that had taken place was that monarchy was transferred in decentralised feudatory states. Returning from the Mughal camp in 1707, Shahu found himself in a difficult

and helpless situation. Tarabai, widow of Rajaram, was championing the cause of her son. So, some Jagirdars like Sawant of Wadi, Kanhoji Angre and others took the advantage and attached themselves to Tarabai, while others joined Shahu. But all were inspired by selfish motives and wanted to become independent of the King. When Shahu's position became stronger, he granted fresh jagirs. This led to the rise of military aristocracy. Many references about Tarabai's sardars having joined Shahu at the battlefield are found. Besides that, Shahu gave other offices and titles outside the council, such as Senakarte - Balaji Vishvanath, Sena-Saheb-Subha - Parsoji Bhosale, Sarlashkar - Haibatrao Nimbalkar, Sena-Khaskel - Khanderao Dabhade etc.. Thus, new pattern of the constitution provided sufficient scope for their individual enterprises. And their ambition could extend their sphere of influence. Under this new pattern the central government of the Chhatrapati needed not to rule over the territories conquered by them. But the fact should not be forgotten that Shahu's feudatories possessed more resources. Shahu depended on them for his position.

The monarchy was further weakened by complicated revenue system of Balaji Vishvanath. According to the system the burden of civil and military administration

of the major portion of the empire was thrust on these saranjamdars. That was a great source of weakness of central government and Chhatrapati; because this system led to the establishment of independent states under the leadership of feudatories. Under the system central government was greatly weakened as they did not have independent source of money necessary for large army. Raja Shahu was very much interested in undertaking the expedition against Sambhaji of Kolhapur. But he did not have strong army as well as a capable sardar. Shahu was anxiously waiting for the army of Bajirao to join him. Bajirao did not send the army and the master must have been disappointed. Shahu ultimately depended upon the Pratinidhi to take out the expedition.[8] Contrary to this situation the Peshwa emerged as independent ruler.

The imperial policy which was approved by Shahu was the cause of decentralization of monarchy. The preeminence of the Peshwa was grafted on it during the reign of Shahu. Besides there were feudatory families of the Peshwa of Poona, Holkar of Indore, Gaikwad of Baroda, Shinde of Gwalior, Pawars of Dhar. In the period of Bajirao-I he held his supreme authority of the confederacy. All the Maratha officers had their fiefs and had self-independent powers. They paid only lip homage to the king and his authority, the symbol of unity.

Shahu stood for unity in the centrifuged confederate state. But Peshwa, taking that advantage, followed his selfish motive and worked his own way. Last days of Shahu had a remarkable example of Peshwa's selfishness. When his queen Sakwarbai was prevented to meet Shahu, Balajirao found the opportunity for private interview and induced the Raja to give him deed. It empowered the Peshwa to manage the whole government of the Maratha Empire on condition of Raja's approval.

When Raja Shahu died, he had very shrewdly pressed Sakwarbai for funeral pyre. Because Peshwa wanted to get rid of that ambitious lady. Then Yamaji Pant and Pratinidhi were arrested and put in chain and sent to Purandar. Thus, Balaji Bajirao secured his position of power and asceretained it. Exactly the same was his policy towards Ramraja and Tarabai after Shahu's death in 1749.

> *At the head of government was the Peshwa, who had power to act as the deputy of the Satara Raja. He was, therefore, the head of the feudal nobles and one of them at the same time. The feudal nobles rendered military service in return for their fiefs or saranjams and were independent rulers in everything but name. Thus, the whole constitution was a curious combination of democracy and feudal autocracy.*[9]

The arrangements that were made at Sangola by the King Ramraja at dictation of Peshwa were known as "Sangola Agreement".[10] This arrangement tied the hads and feet of Ramraja and tightened the hold of the Peshwa on him. He depended on the servants of the Peshwa for practically everything. The new arrangements brought out clearly one outstanding fact and that is the unrivalled supremacy of the Peshwa and vanishing power of Chhatrapati.

In the Sangola Agreement, Peshwa crushed all authorities of the Ashta Pradhans and Tarabai cursed Nana Saheb Peshwa for his successful proceedings. Hence she wished to seize Ramraja and with Ramraja under her, she would wield all the authority of the state. But to seize Ramraja was not to seize the state or to capture the King was not to capture the power. The Chhatrapati was now divested of all the royal authority and real governing power and became only a nominal head of the Maratha Raj. The power had slipped into the hands of Peshwa and so it did not matter much who captured the king. Peshwa had reduced the amount of privy purse of Ramraja from six lakhs to four lakhs.[11] Because it had mentioned the exact extent of the Raja of Satara's own territory, exclusive of the Peshwa's conquest, which seems to be little more than he then

had, with much the same revenue.

Tarabai captured Ramraja and Chhatrapati became a prisoner of Tarabai. Ramraja was strongly guarded by two Tarabai's staunch adherents. And with this all prestige and all power were departed from the house of Shivaji. Tarabai's insatiable ambition for authority resulted in this tragic end of the Chhatrapati's sovereignty. This incident marks the downfall of the House of Shivaji. But it was not Tarabai who brought about the downfall. It had long begun and without being a prisoner of Tarabai, Ramraja was a mere puppet in the hands of the Peshwa. Tarabai only gave a tangible shape to an already accomplished fact. She contributed to complete the downfall. Ramraja continued in the confinement till her death in 1761.

Peshwa Madhavrao released Chhatrapati of Satara and performed formal coronation in 1763. But the administration remained under the control of the Peshwa. Chhatrapati of Satara was restricted by Peshwa's government, strict regulations were made for his functioning and demands. The Chhatrapati had no authority even to select his successor as he liked. Ramraja had his grandson in mind as his successor, but Nana Phadnis had pressed his proposal on Ramraja. Afterwards Ramraja accepted Nana's proposal and adopted Vithoji Bhosale of Vavi.

When Ramraja died on 9 December 1777, Nana Phadnis

sanctioned only five thousand rupees for his funeral obsequies. Sadashiv Anant was the person appointed to supply the money. He writes -

> *It is right, we should know precisely how much is to be extended on the Kreea (funeral rites). Ten or twelve thousand rupees will be required at least. In the meantime we have elephants, horses and clothes that we can give away, but not enough money. I brought with me only five thousand rupees, which I have got but we shall certainly want eight or nine thousand rupees more.*[12]

Thus, Ramraja, Chhatrapati of Satara lived at first in Tarabai's confinement and afterwards under Peshwa's control. The Raja of Satara, poor and helpless as he was, did not maintain his dignity and could not assert his authority in any administration. All executive power remained with the Peshwa.

> *The young king was not given a real chance of learning his administrative duties or showing capabilities. The Peshwa after a bitter experience of the intrigue and factions at the capital, had made up his mind long before the late King's death to assume all powers into his own hands. He first secured the cordial support and gradually removed all the office of the government to Poona. Thus, throwing Satara into the background and indirectly compelling both Ramraja and*

Tarabai to submit to his wishes in their own personal need.[13]

After the death of Madhavrao on 18 November 1772, the Maratha government in Poona began declining rapidly. The civil war at Poona weakened the central authority. The guiding power in the administration inevitably passed on to a minister or a board of ministers. But no minister, however dictatorial, could exactly fill the place of a lawful master. In these circumstances Nana Phadnis took action about liquidating the council of Maratha state and made himself the sole autocrat. Nana Phadnis was helped by Mahadji Shinde. They wielded full power right upto the death of the young Peshwa Savai Madhavrao in 1795 .

Such was the situation when Shahu-II was coronated as Chhatrapati of Satara on 11 December 1778. He was adopted son of Ramraja and had no power in the administration, even to perform any ceremonial function in his family. Nana Phadnis wrote to Sadashiv Anant that they should not spend more than fifty thousand Rupees on the marriage ceremony of Raja's daughter.[14] He had no authority to solve the problem of disputes and internal administration of the Satara fort. Nana sought only the legal sanction (seal) from the King for all his acts.[15] The inexperienced Chhatrapati had no other

way but to accept it. After the death of Madhavrao-II Bajirao-II tried for robes of Peshwaship with the help of Raja Shahu-II. In this connection Nana Phadnis tried to restore the Chhatrapati but in vain.

After the accession of Peshwa Bajirao-II, Poona government witnessed a scramble for power. Every big and small Jahagirdar joined one another for achieving their selfish motives. The rapid changes at Poona enraged the King in Satara. To seize the opportunity, Shahu-II tried to be free with the help of Shinde and Raja of Kolhapur. But failed very miserably. The declining administration of Poona government and helpless condition of Raja of Satara gave opportunity to the English for their entry into Maratha politics.

In 1800 the death of Nana Phadnis proved turning point in the Maratha history. The vassal states of confederacy began to assume more and more power and the character of independence. The Maratha confederacy became a house divided against itself. The bitter hatred and mutual jealousies and feuds of the confederates gave the English the opportunity they needed. The decline of the military power of Poona threw the Peshwa entirely into the hands of Daulatrao Shinde. Shinde's attempts to crush his rival Holkar added fuel to the fire. Bajirao-II agreed the treaty of Bassein for his own security, in 1802. The treaty brought him security against his

feudatories but did not restore him to the dignity and authority of his former position as the head of the Maratha confederacy.

In 1808 Pratapsinh was crowned as Chhatrapati of Satara, after his father's death. Peshwa Bajirao-II and Trimbakji Dengle were present in the coronation ceremony. The relation of the Peshwa with the Chhatrapati Pratapsinh and his mother were in perfect amity and goodwill during the first few years. These relations reflected entire gratification and appreciation and attention, Peshwa paid to their wishes. But when Peshwa succeeded in capturing Chatarsingh in 1811, this event adversely affected their relationship. Consequently, Chhatrapati Pratapsinh alongwith his family, was confined in the fort of Satara from 1812 to 1818. Trimbakji Dengle was appointed as administrator and to watch the movements of Chhatrapati of Satara. The arrival of Elphinstone in Maharashtra was a clear call for uprooting the Peshwa. Peshwa removed Chhatrapati with his family from Satara fort and kept them in the lonely fort of Wasota.

Raja Pratapsinh tried to assert his authority with the help of his friends like Rango Bapuji Gupte, Balwant Malhar Chitnis and the English. His mother Maisaheb, an intelligent and talented woman, formed

a plan with the help of British for making Raja free.[16] In the internal administration, the Peshwa was likewise not free to exercise his authority uncontrolled over his immediate subordinate chiefs. When Peshwa opened war with the British, he did his best to win over the Chhatrapati by all possible means for the Maratha cause. Bajirao took the Chhatrapati and his family with him during his fight against the British. The battle of Ashti marked the end of the rule of Peshwa Bajirao-II. The Peshwa lost all hopes of recovering his position as the head of the government. Chhatrapati Pratapsinh along with his mother and two brothers joined the British near Ashti. The fort of Satara was surrendered to the British on 10 February 1818. They prepared to restored Pratpsinh to his ancestral position, and 'Satara Proclamation' was issued all over Maharashtra. Thus, Chhatrapati of Satara was restored by a foreign power, i.e., British on 10 April, 1818. Captain Grant Duff was appointed as his Resident and guardian.

Satara proclamation sealed Peshwa Bajirao's fate and installed the Chhatrapati in his seat at Satara. They implemented the measures detailed in the proclamation.[17] No doubt, Satara Proclamation is the finest example of British diplomacy. They restored the Chhatrapati of Satara as legitimate ruler because they wanted

to dominate the Peshwa. It was intended to eradicate from the public mind all respect, goodwill and loyalty for Peshwa.[18] Under the order of the Governor General a small territory nearly equalling the present district of Satara was assigned to the Chhatrapati. The creation of this small kingdom was a measure of pure expidency having been entirely conceived and executed by Elphinstone. Raja Pratapsinh was invested with the power of administration in April 1822. Shahaji, the successor of Pratapsinh died childless on 5 April 1848 and the short-lived state of Satara was annexed to the British dominion.

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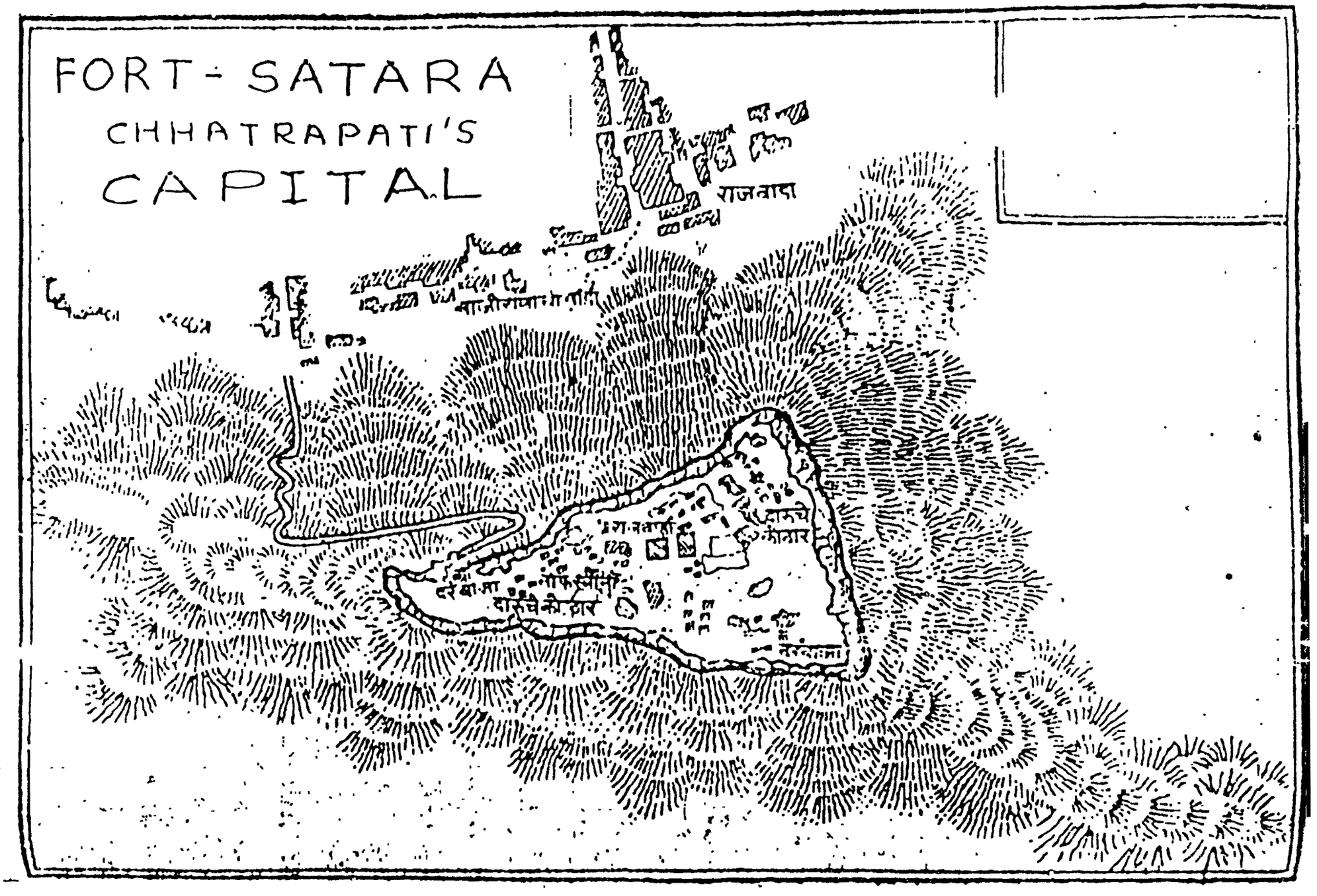
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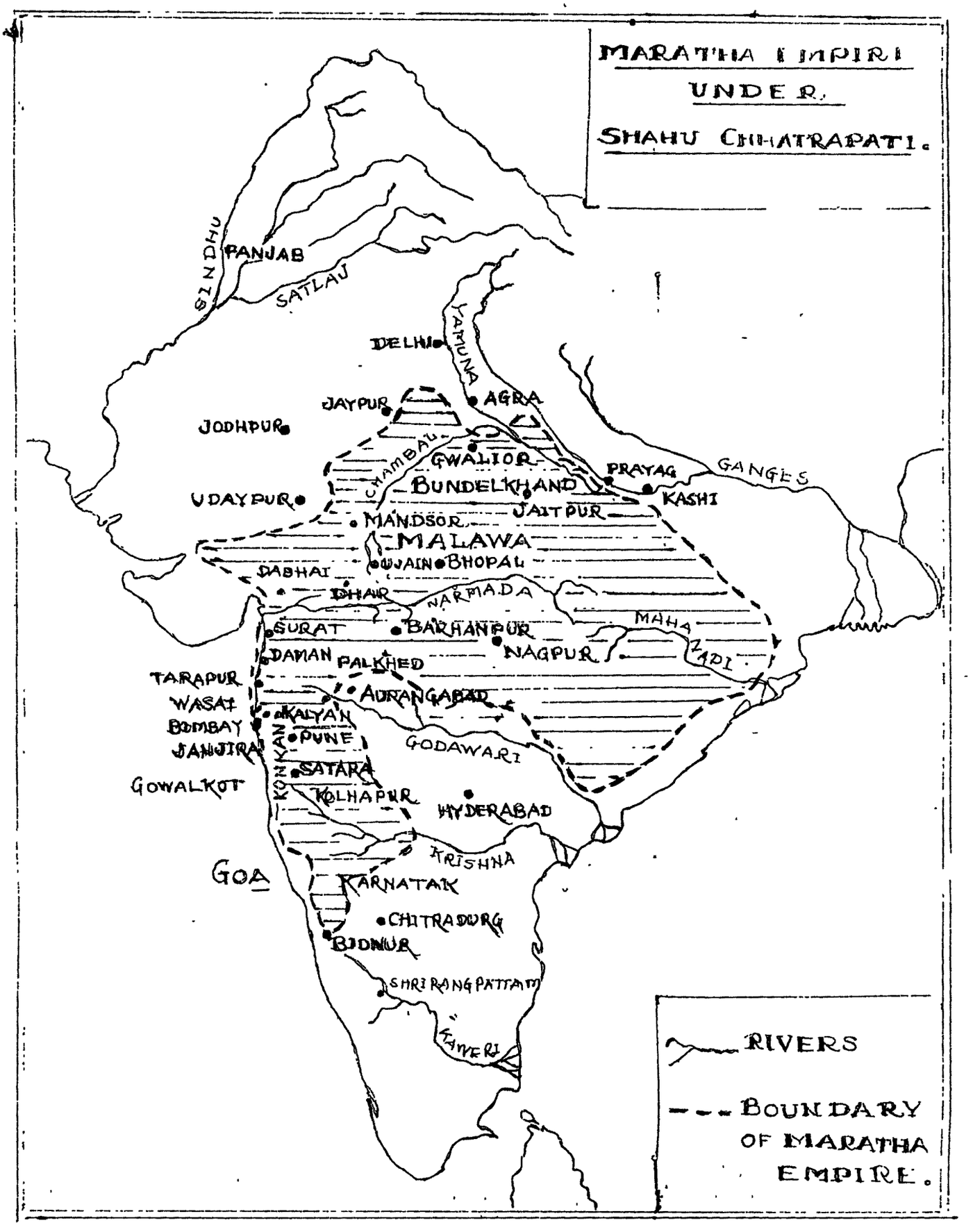
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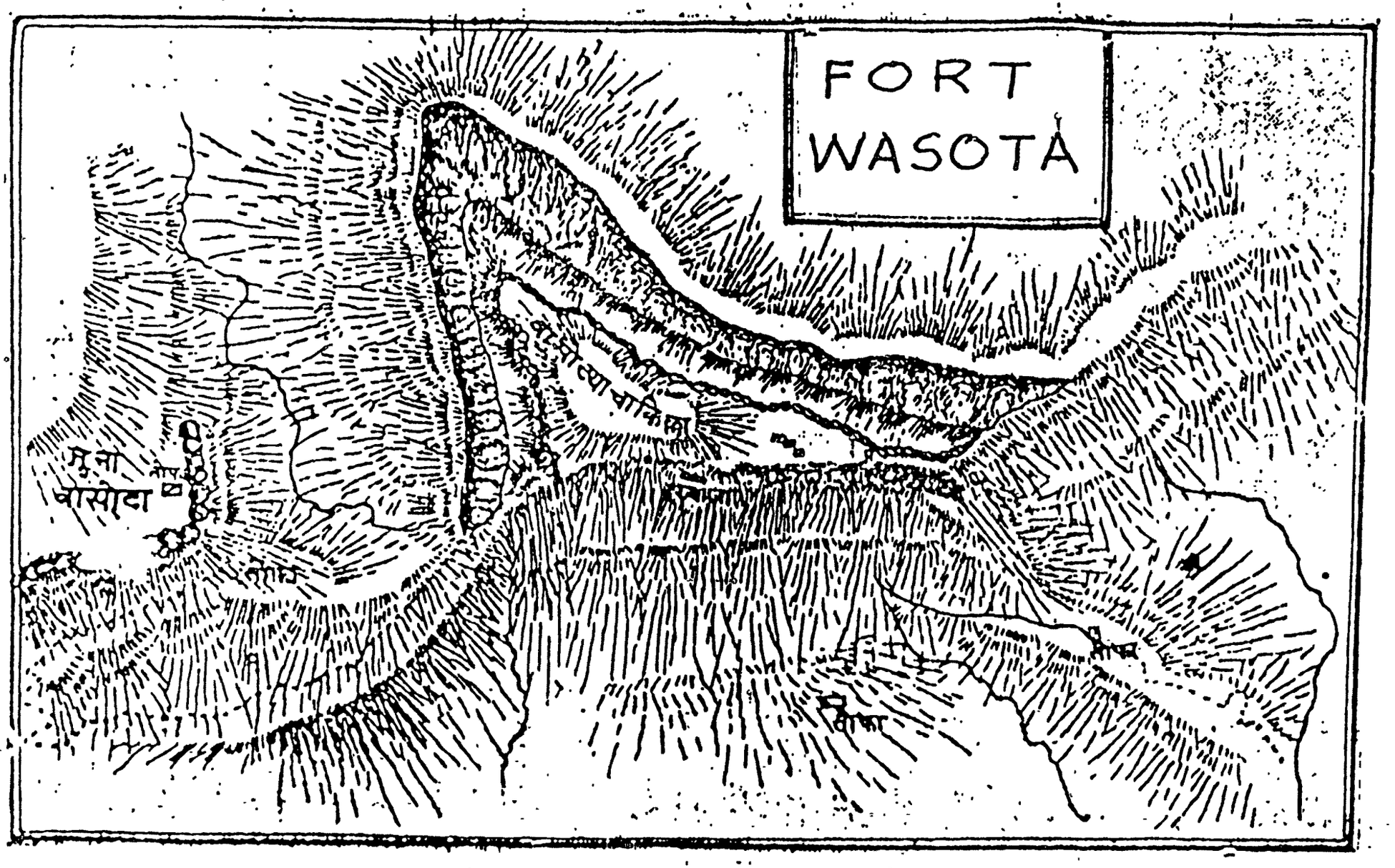
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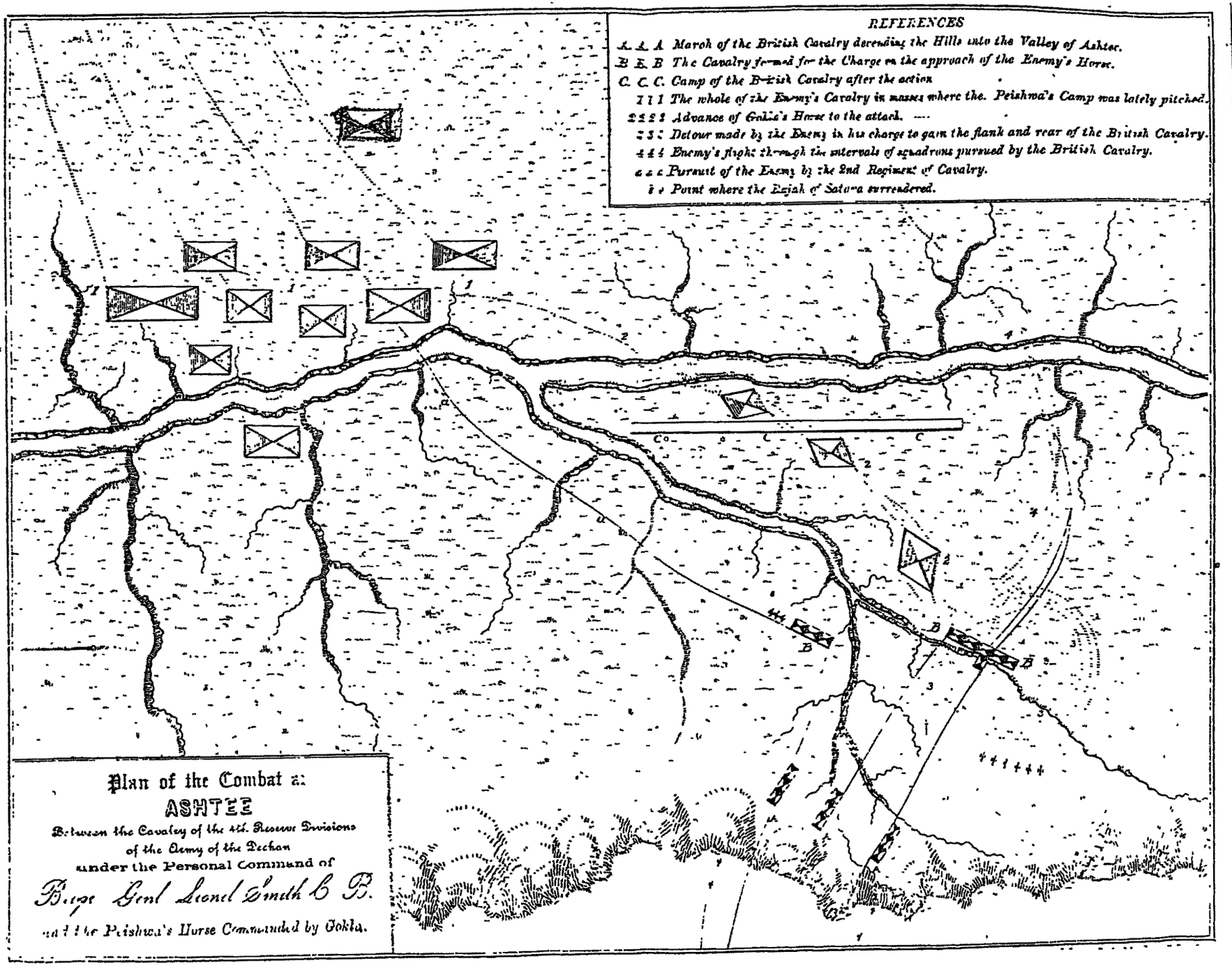
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B B B The Cavalry formed for the Charge on the approach of the Enemy's Horse.
C. C. C. Camp of the British Cavalry after the action
1 1 1 The whole of the Enemy's Cavalry in masses where the Peishwa's Camp was lately pitched.
2 2 2 2 Advance of Gokla's Horse to the attack.
3 3 : Detour made by the Enemy in his charge to gain the flank and rear of the British Cavalry.
4 4 4 Enemy's flight through the intervals of squadrons pursued by the British Cavalry.
a a c Pursuit of the Enemy by the 2nd Regiment of Cavalry.
i i Point where the Rajah of Satara surrendered.
Plan of the Combat at
ASHTEE
Between the Cavalry of the 1st. Reserve Division
of the Army of the Deckan
under the Personal Command of
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and the Peishwa's Horse Commanded by Gokla.